

THE LOVE LETTERS
OF THOMAS CARLYLE
AND JANE WELSH



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CARLYLE AND JANE WELSH—II

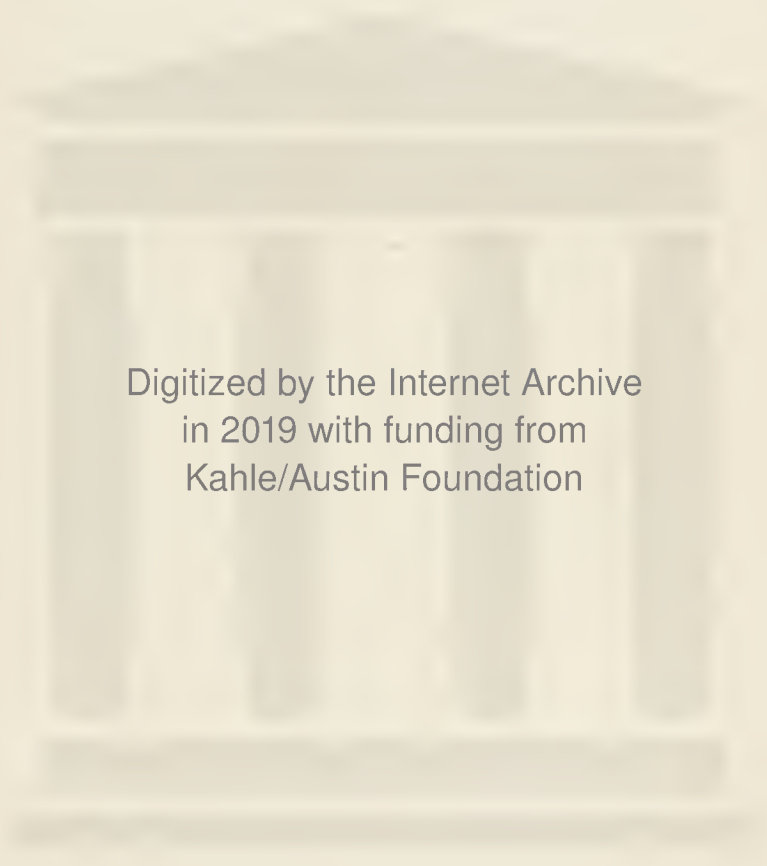
UNIFORM WITH THIS WORK

NEW LETTERS AND MEMORIALS

OF JANE WELSH CARLYLE. A Collection of hitherto Unpublished Letters. Annotated by THOMAS CARLYLE, and edited by ALEXANDER CARLYLE, with an Introduction by Sir JAMES CRICHTON BROWNE, M.D., LL.D., F.R.S., numerous Illustrations drawn in Lithography by T. R. WAY, and Photogravure Portraits from hitherto unreproduced Originals. In Two Volumes. Demy 8vo.

NEW LETTERS OF THOMAS

CARLYLE. Edited and Annotated by ALEXANDER CARLYLE, with Notes and an Introduction and numerous Illustrations. In Two Volumes. Demy 8vo.



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JANE WELSH, ET. 25

THE LOVE LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND JANE WELSH

EDITED BY ALEXANDER CARLYLE, M.A.
WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS
TWO IN COLOUR. TWO VOLUMES. VOL. II



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His anxieties relieved by receipt of Miss Welsh's last Letter. Blessed be Cadmus, who first imported letters into Europe ; blessed be Jane who makes so noble a use of that invention. She transports him from the smoky furnaces of Birmingham home to clear skies and souls that love him.—What a strange tragi-comedy is that of Dugald G., which she describes so neatly and with such graphic touches ! Her conduct in the affair a pretty mixture of mercy, gracefulness, and female cunning. Wishes to know to whom she is "engaged" : is he a genius and "elegant" ? Is he a poet or a philosopher or both in one ?—Asks if she is deliberating about the task he assigned her ; he will take no denial.—Is idle himself : *Nondum* should be his motto, with Poppies argent and three Sloths dormant on a Tree disleaved. Is growing quite an Asiatic ; and alas, this is not "Araby the Blest" !—Day-dreams of becoming the interpreter of truth and manly integrity and imaginative beauty, with Jane his fair and pure Egeria, to perfect, adorn, and recompense his labours !—Is going back to London, and perhaps into Kent with Mrs. Strachey and the Orator.—She *must* translate something of Schiller's for the "Life" 1-8

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Thinks she may complain that Carlyle has misunderstood her last Letter: it was certainly not her meaning to reproach him with want of self-denial, but to express her confidence in his magnanimity and his willingness

always to prefer her happiness to his own.—Thanks Heaven that Carlyle is “not hurt or angry,” but fails to see that she has given him cause to be so,—having shown him, by declaring that she would marry no one else, that she esteemed him above all the men she had ever seen or was likely to see.—Her maxims are the convictions of her judgment.—She feels that she is capable of a love to which *no* deprivation would be a sacrifice, but the all-perfect mortal who could inspire it, exists only in the romance of her own imagination.—The nature of her love for Carlyle is deep and calm, more like the quiet river than the torrent.—As to rank and wealth, she merely wishes to see him earning a *certain* livelihood and exercising the profession of a gentleman. She withholds her immediate consent to his proposal because, independently of prudential considerations, she is not sure that her sentiments towards him are proper ones for a husband; but she has no doubt they will become so, as her mind enlarges and her heart improves.—Carlyle’s hint about *parting*, is surely meant to be taken only in a metaphorical sense. How could she part from the only living soul that understands her?—He must give up his wild scheme of farming Craigenputtock: were he to engage in the concern, all would be ruined together.—She has been tormented with headache, as usual 80-87

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Has reached Birmingham, on his way home.—Gives reasons for not having written sooner.—It is a shame that he should cause Miss Welsh a moment's pain. “How many men are there in England that have such a heart to care for them?” He were mad if he did not prize it above all earthly things.—The publication of “Schiller” delayed by the engraver.—On reviews and reviewers. “If literature had no evils but false critics, it would be a very manageable thing.”—Means to send Goethe a copy of this “Schiller,” he is a man, not a *dwarf of letters*.—Is going to stay a few days with Badams to receive his final precepts, and then hasten to Annandale to arrange some plan of residence for himself.—Asks Miss Welsh to write to Mainhill, in a week after receiving this Letter . . . 99-106

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LETTER 119. CARLYLE—Mainhill, 23 March, 1825

Has no intention of taking up residence in Edinburgh: towered cities with their hideous tumult and contamination are a horror to him till his health is re-established. To live in Edinburgh is a project as yet dubious and a-far off.—“O immaculate genius, and why did'st thou linger talking with the Orator, or dawdling in the sooty purlieus of Brummagem?” Knows not but he is yet too soon for doing any business in Edinburgh.—Tells Miss Welsh he has rented Hoddam Hill. Describes the place, its attractions and his proposed mode of life there. So she must not revoke her approbation of a rural life, for her sanction is a thing he requires for prosecuting his schemes with spirit. Like Miss Welsh, he looks forward to their next meeting with anxiety and impatience. Counsels her not to let her kind heart be troubled. She is to consider him and all that he has and is, as altogether hers, to take or reject, according to her will. The strength or weakness of their means is nothing, if it be rightly estimated and managed. Will write when he arrives in Edinburgh, and go out to Haddington and stay as long as she will let him.—“Schiller” inscription 109-116

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soarings keep an eye upon its creeping prey.”—Is consoled by his increasing faith in the return of health. Is already wonderfully better, and the thought of growing completely well is “like a second boyhood” to him.—The advantages of living in the country: the mountains in view, the green unmanufactured carpet, the fleecy clouds, the azure vault, and the pure breath of his native Solway blowing wooingly thro’ all his haunts.—“Society?” There is little, very little, of it anywhere, and “unhappy is the man whose own door does not enclose what is worth all the rest of it ten times told.”—On Thursday (Term day) a contingent of them files away to Hoddam Hill.—Reception of Jane’s presents.—James Johnstone and the Haddington Parish School 123-129

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of Carlyle will put all to rights.—Has become reconciled
to the Rennies of Phantassie.—Her money matters are
all arranged, and now she is as poor as Carlyle. He will
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Letter for Carlyle to read.—Has deceived Carlyle in telling
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of a voluntary disclosure, for she has been moved to
honesty by Mrs. Montagu.—Asks Carlyle to reply instantly,
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frankness ought to cancel all that went before.—This
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and prize it beyond all fame, power, and happiness.—The
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she does not know him, that no living mortal seems to know him.—Counsels her to leave him. They will suffer to the heart, but time will teach them to endure it. No affection is unalterable or eternal.—He knows her generous heart ; but it is Fate not she that can save him.—Repeats that she does not know him. Asks her to come, see, and determine. “ Let me hear you, and do you hear me. As I *am* take me or refuse me : but not as I *am not*.”—She is to write and say when she will arrive.—“ You are for ever dear to me, in spite of all I say and feel ” . . . 150-155

LETTER 129. MISS WELSH—Templand, 30 July, 1825

Asks Carlyle if he means to kill her. Is it right to keep her so long in doubt ? She may have merited his displeasure and perhaps his scorn, but not this terrible silence. Were she strong enough, she would come to him this very day, and her tears would make him forget everything but the love she bears him. “ O, I do love you, my own Friend, above the whole Earth : no human being was ever half so dear to me,—none, none.”—It is inhuman to leave her in this suspense.—“ Be your answer what it may, I will love you and venerate you to the last. You may be no longer mine, but I will be yours in life, in death, through all eternity ” 156

LETTER 130. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 10 August, 1825

Owes his dearest little Ruth many thanks for her unflinching love of him.—So they are not to part.—“ O my Darling, how could we ever part ? Do we not love each other ? Does not your fervid, trembling spirit cleave to mine as to its pillar of hope in the darkness and tempests of life ? ” For him to give her up would be a sacrifice of nearly all that still binds him to the world by any tie of hope, that still tinges his sky with a streak of dawn in the gloom that overshadows him.—In calm hours hope has not yet forsaken him.—More perverse destinies than theirs have changed to smoothness and serenity.—Why should they murmur ? Are they not rich in better things than silver and gold, or the vain babble of stupid men ? Heavenly trust of soul to soul can soften all afflictions.—O that Hoddam Hill were a palace of the Fairies, with rosy

gardens, velvet lawns and stately chambers! She will come to it, however, and her love of him will make it pleasant.—“Come, *meine Liebe!* I long to see thy fair face again” 157-162

LETTER 131. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 30 August, 1825

“On Thursday night, at a quarter before eight, I shall be waiting for you at the end of the Hoddam Bridge Road, with some sort of quadruped to bring you hither.” So make haste, my Child! “I long to behold thee once more, and press thy heart to mine” 162, 163

LETTER 132. MISS WELSH—Kelhead Kilns,
2 September, 1825

Is billeted in a snug little cottage by the wayside; will Carlyle, with all possible haste, come and fetch her? If the pony is engaged, she can *walk* two miles in pleasant company 163, 164

LETTER 133. MISS WELSH—Dumfries, 20 September, 1825

She cannot lie down to-night until she has *written* to Carlyle the farewell and blessing which she was cruelly prevented from speaking.—“Oh, what a sad heart is mine this night!” “What I would give to have you here,—within my arms for one, one moment!” “Oh God! this is falling from the azure heaven on the miry earth! When shall I be so happy again as I have been in these last weeks?” “God Almighty bless you, soul of my existence! I shall think of you every hour till we meet again” 164-166

LETTER 134. MISS WELSH—Dumfries, 21 September, 1825

Sends a neckerchief to Carlyle. He will be forced to think of her every time he puts it on 166, 167

LETTER 135. MISS WELSH—Templand, 22 September, 1825

Writes about the letting of Craigenputtock.—Would prefer Carlyle's brother Alick as tenant, “infinitely before any

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other man." Business will be an excuse for Carlyle's
coming to see her 167, 168

LETTER 136. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 1 October, 1825

Expresses his disappointment in not being well enough to
come and see Miss Welsh.—May be able to do so on
Thursday.—Is very unhappy, but loves her as his life,
and far more 168, 169

LETTER 137. MISS WELSH—Templand, 6 October, 1825

Her disappointment that Craigenputtock is let to a stranger.
—Solicitous about Carlyle's ill-health; her grief that
she was not near to nurse and comfort him.—Has been
expecting him at Templand. Hope deferred till she
was half-distracted with fear of some disaster. Her
anxiety fearfully multiplied since her existence was con-
nected with his; but does not wish it otherwise, for it
is better to suffer with him than to live happy alone.—
Asks Carlyle to come: her Grandfather and Aunt will
give him no freezing reception; her Mother, too, if
she happen to be in her present humour, will be glad to
see him. And her own heart's welcome will *not* fail him.
He will come for her single sake 169-171

LETTER 138. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 19 October, 1825

Had a melancholy journey home (from Templand), with
the thoughts of bygone joys for his companions.—Wistful
recollections.—There is a misery beyond the sharpest
parting sadness, the misery of a heart grown dead to
sadness as to joy. This also he has felt; and ought to
rejoice that he feels it no more.—How is he again to
mingle in the coarse turmoil of men, and gather from
their selfishness and harsh contradiction the means of
happiness? "Up! Up! thou sluggard! not to plan
but to execute what is already planned."—Has worked
two days at Tieck, in other ten, hopes to be done with
him.—Tells Miss Welsh not to fear utterly. "Life is yet
all before us, and many proud hours when we shall with-
stand in true and closest affection all its storms and
perils, and be more to one another than all the Universe

besides.”—*She* with the long black curling locks is not here! “Let us trust that these ‘Sabbath weeks’ were but an emblem of the long Sabbath-years we are to spend together forever and ever.”—Interview with Edward Irving at Annan. Mollified by the sight of the poor Orator.—“Be not anxious about me or yourself, my own Jane! We love one another, and the most precious part of our happiness is out of the power of Fortune” 171-177

LETTER 139. MISS WELSH—Templand, 25 October, 1825

Carlyle's last Letter very consolatory to her who, dwelling “amid wind and whist and ill-humour,” stands sorely in need of consolation.—Reports her Mother's diatribe against Carlyle, which she declares to be “a pack of damned nonsense the whole of it.” “Truly she has seen her own temper have a hundred times worse effect on me than ever yours had.”—“I am not afraid that my happiness will be wrecked upon this rock; nor is my Mother either, if the truth were told.” She will continue to love and admire Carlyle, tho' the whole world should blame her choice. “I have told this to my Mother, once for all, in a tone of decision, which should prevent further remonstrance.”—“So Edward Irving is gone! gone without seeing me! Well, times are changed, and we are changed in them.”—Interrupted (at this point) by her Lancer Cousin (James Baillie): “Such an air, such a voice, such a profusion of little dogs!”—Carlyle has no cause to be jealous of him, “a mere painted butterfly fluttering over the flowery surface of the Earth,—the creature of a sun-shiny day.”—Asks about “*Libertas*,” &c., and the motto of the burning candle 177-184

LETTER 140. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 4 November, 1825

Sympathises with Miss Welsh's distresses, opposite as they are to his own.—“Let us be patient and resolute, and trust in ourselves and each other.”—Maintains that the highest welfare of every human being lies within himself. —To know our duty and to do it is the everlasting rock

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of man's security.—Her Mother is not wise in spoiling Miss Welsh's stinted enjoyments. "Her views of me and my connection with you I cannot greatly blame; they coincide too nearly with my own." "But after all where is the mighty grief? Is it ruin for you to think of giving yourself to me?" She is to consider this, not in the purple light of love, but in the sharp chill light of prudence. He is ready with alacrity to forward her anticipated happiness in any way.—If her love of him was no girlish whim, but the calm, deliberate self-offering of a woman to the man whom her reason and her heart had chosen, she cannot love him too much. "Love me, my Dearest, and let the Devil and the world chatter over it as they like!"—Has finished Tieck; is translating *Das Märchen*, and intends to make "Meister's Travels" the third volume of "German Romance."—Thrown by the ungrateful, untoward nag, Larry.—Explains the motto for her seal.—"I love thee, and am thine forever." "I shall wear thee in my heart of hearts" . . . 185-190

LETTER 141. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 28 November, 1825

Miss Welsh has not done as Job's wife counselled Job. She is still alive, still loving him, and hoping to see good things with him in this world after all. "If you were to die, either blessing God, or any other way, . . . where would the living heart remain that I would long to incorporate with my own?"—"Love me truly, and all will yet be well."—Miss Welsh's Letter received by his Mother, who "has not the pen of a ready writer," and lives "with a most voiceless thought."—Regrets the threatened irruption of puppyism at Haddington.—Advice how to treat her gay Lancer Cousin.—Has himself been, for three weeks, the most busy man in Annandale,—mingling in fit proportions bodily and mental exercise.—Items for "German Romance."—His anxieties aroused by brother Jack's report of Miss Welsh's health. "Oh, my Darling, the bare idea of miseries that might too easily occur, fills my whole soul with darkness!—Never till I had lost thee should I know how deep and abiding was thy dwelling in my heart."—She is not to be alarmed about him and the ungracious beast Larry . . . 191-196

LETTER 142. MISS WELSH—Haddington,
8 December, 1825

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The "irruption of puppyism" all gone.—"This has been a more terrible infliction than anything that befell our friend Job."—She is still alive, still blessing God for all His mercies,—most of all for the great "temporal blessing" she enjoys in Carlyle. What combination of evils could make her wretched, while it is written as with a sunbeam on her soul: "He loves me, he is mine!"—She has at last found something better than fame: "I now know that the deep blessedness of two souls that live in and for each other, is best of all that earth and heaven can bestow."—Her Cousin Baillie is the exact image of Milton's Belial.—Is canvassing for James Johnstone.—The prospect of Carlyle's coming to Edinburgh does not delight her so much as it might have done; for, if her Mother does not alter in her present conduct towards her, she cannot suffer him to come hither.—Lockhart going to be Editor of the "Quarterly Review" . 196-199

LETTER 143. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 11 December, 1825

As proud of Miss Welsh's last Letter as he would have been of Bish's head prize.—The hopes that stand in the distance. But, step after step, will bring their realization.—Is done with Musäus; two volumes of "German Romance" translated. Would it were done, that he might attempt something of more pith and moment!—"And thou, my fair Guardian Saint, my hot-tempered Angel, my beloved scolding Wife, thou shalt help me with it, and rejoice with me in success or comfort me in failure."—Rejoices to hear Miss Welsh talk as she does about the vulgar bubble Fame.—Goethe on fame.—The Farm of Shawbrae 199-203

LETTER 144. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill,
29 December, 1825

Miss Welsh is, in good sooth, a most benignant little Genius, and does him messages of all sorts with the promptitude and dainty helpfulness of an Ariel. She might beseech

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the bosom of a chivalrous Prince, and poor he has neither chivalry nor Princedom to share with her,—“nothing but a knapsack and eighteen florins to share with any one.” Honest James Johnstone will prosper thro’ her means. Her Epistle Recommendatory in the matter of Shawbrae will be a new tie of gratitude between them.—His Mother on Shawbrae: “leaves it all to His disposal, for what is good the Lord will give.”—Is not disconsolate or in straits about his future. “Patience, the day *will* come, my day and yours, and we shall know what it is to be happy with such happiness as this world can give, and blessed in one another with a happiness which breathes of better worlds.”—Will likely leave Hoddam Hill for Edinburgh on Tuesday morning 204-208

LETTER 145. CARLYLE—21 Salisbury Street, Edinburgh, 7 January, 1826

Been in Town two days.—Vehemently wishes for tidings of Miss Welsh, and still more for a sight of her kind countenance, the fairest object that for him this Universe holds in its domain.—He does not wish to visit Haddington in the present aspect of affairs; he should give little pleasure and get little. Yet it does seem hard that he cannot see his own kind-hearted little “Weibchen,” and she within two hours’ travel of him.—Nevertheless, he will not aggravate her share of the evil by loading her with his.—Sends her “Undine,” and says he has some thought of including it in “German Romance.”—She is to write to his Mother and to himself, and to love him all the days of her life 208-211

LETTER 146. CARLYLE—21 Salisbury Street, 14 January, 1826

Sends Miss Welsh the two first sheets of “German Romance.”
—“You are not to be here till next month, and I must not think of coming out to see you?” Hard! It is unspeakable.—“Are you not mine, my own chosen only Darling of my soul? And I must not see you?” “O why did you join yourself with *me*? I declare I could sometimes weep for you; tho’ I love you as my own soul.”—Is thinking of renting a Cottage, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, and bringing in his sisters Mary and Jane

to keep it.—A proposal from Mr. Leslie—not acceptable.—

“Write to me, my Darling: I have no friend but thee.

Write all that is in thy true heart” 211-214

LETTER 147. MISS WELSH—Haddington,
15 January, 1826

Had serious thoughts of setting out for Edinburgh last night.

“I felt as if it would do me a world of good just to fall upon your neck and weep, and tell you once more what I have told you so often already, that you are dearer to me than aught on earth. But it must not be! Things are bad enough already.”—Does not approve of Carlyle’s plan of taking up house with Mary and Jane, nor of Mr. Leslie’s proposal 214, 215

LETTER 148. CARLYLE—21 Salisbury Street,
17 January, 1826

Has not renounced the plan of taking up house in the vicinity of Edinburgh.—Must have shelter from the horrors of Edinburgh lodgings.—Doubts that Miss Welsh could live in poverty without being wretched 216, 217

LETTER 149. CARLYLE—Edinburgh, 21 January, 1826

Miss Welsh is dear to him beyond the utterance of words; they are bound together by invisible ties and cords of inmost affection stronger than the arrows of Death. “It is no girl’s-fondness that irradiates my path with false and transient splendour: it is the calm, deliberate love of a noble-minded woman who has given her generous self to me without reserve, the influences of whose fair spirit shine over my life with the warmth and light of a mild May Sun.”—Who knows but they may be married by this time twelvemonth! “And Jane shall be mine, and not another’s, and the soft breath of wedded love shall shed its balm over us, and refresh the thirsty desert of existence into fragrance and verdure as of Heaven!”—The Literary Newspaper. If it take effect, he would bring in his sisters to keep house for him, till assured of success, and then bring in — if she would come! Would she?—Going home on Thursday or Friday.—

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Sending Goethe his "Life of Schiller."—Failure of
Constable, Ballantyne, and Sir Walter Scott . . . 217-222

LETTER 150. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 25 January, 1826

Promises a long Letter to Carlyle when he has got home.—
James Johnstone elected.—Her Mother shows signs of
relenting.—"Oh yes, Dear, all will come right in process
of time ;—only I am afraid we shall die in the interim " 222-224

LETTER 151. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 31 January, 1826

Hardly knows whether to laugh or weep over this last Act of
their Drama.—She is now actually basking in the April
sunshine of her Mother's smiles.—Long and confidential
dialogue with her about their leaving Haddington.—Re-
solved : " You are to hire the said nice little cottage . . .
and next November, we are to — hire one within some
dozen yards of it !! so that we may all live together like
one family until such time as we are married, and after."
—Her Mother wished to give up everything, and go and
live with her Father at Templand.—"Should you not
like to have such agreeable neighbours ? " "To me it
seems as if the kingdom of heaven were at hand " . 224-227

LETTER 152. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 5 February, 1826

Is exceedingly busy.—No moment of his waking hours unoc-
cupied.—Shawbrae lost.—Trying for Scotsbrig.—Heartily
rejoices at Miss Welsh's reconciliation with her Mother,
and prays that it may be permanent and cordial.—What
a bright project Jane has formed ! Matured in a single
night, like *Jack's Bean* in the Nursery Tale, and with
houses in it too ! Fears it will never answer half as well
in practice as it does on paper. It is impossible for two
households to live as if they were one.—He will never
enjoy her company till she is all his own. Would the
number of *parties* and formal visitors be diminished or
bettered in quality by her scheme ? His first use of a
house will be to slam the door of it in the face of nauseous
intrusions of all sorts which it can exclude.—These are

his first crude thoughts on the business ; if Miss Welsh is serious in her intention, he will willingly resume them, and may find many things to alter 227-232

LETTER 153. MISS WELSH—Haddington,
21 February, 1826

Surprised that Carlyle is not transported by her project. Thinks him hard to please. Chides him for non-compliance with her projects, while she has so readily complied with all his. "Suppose we take different roads and try how that answers."—Suggests that Carlyle would be admirably well off with Catherine Aurora Kirkpatrick ; while she might better her fortunes in many quarters.—Enumerates her lovers.—"But what am I talking about ? as if we were not already married,—alas, married past redemption !" At times she is so disheartened that she sits down and weeps ; and then at other times ! Oh Heavens ! . 233-236

LETTER 154. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 26 February, 1826

Has noticed more than once that Miss Welsh has privately formed a judgment by no means favourable to his present walk and conversation. Such criticisms from her affect him with a sharp distress. He thought they were *one* ; he finds they are still *two*.—He can in no wise accuse himself of fluctuations and changes of purpose. It seems to him that he has walked forward in one path with more and more steadiness, and with at least no *thought* of fluctuation. And he intends to continue so till his end is attained.—His reception of her plan (of living as one family in two cottages) ought not to mislead her : he regarded it as only a brief whim, one night old when dispatched to him, and probably dead of a natural death before he received it.—He knows she could make many good matches ; thinks himself the *worst* she ever thought of. He reminds her that they are *not* married already, and that it depends on herself whether they ever be married. Says this not in a spirit of vulgar defiance, but in the spirit of disinterested affection for her, and of fear for the reproaches of his own conscience. If there be any other whose Wife she would rather be, he calls on her to marry that other and leave him to his destiny . 236-243

LETTER 155. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 4 March, 1826

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If her "tearful smiles" have given so deep a wound to the heart of her friend, his tearful frown has as deeply wounded hers. But she has no right to complain, being the aggressor.—Assures Carlyle that she has not, and can never have, the semblance of a wish to part her fortunes from his. He will always be "the chosen only Partner of her heart and soul." How could he ever think it possible she should make a new choice! "Let me not have reason to suppose that, possessing your love, I am unfortunate enough to be without your respect."—In truth she thinks him neither whimsical nor inconstant, but only noble and wise.—Provoked by the fortune which keeps them asunder, she is too apt to vent the spleen of the moment on him.—To make her offers of freedom, is an outrage which she finds it not easy to forgive.—
 "Farewell, my beloved, I am still yours" . . . 243-248

LETTER 156. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 7 March, 1826

Has found in Miss Welsh's last Letter nothing but long-suffering meekness, gentleness, and loving, weeping expostulation.—Her heart has taught her a philosophy better than all the schools will ever teach him.—Has she not cause to feel displeasure at many things he does and neglects to do? "And am not I your last and only friend: to whom can you utter that displeasure but to me?"—"These perplexities come of our living eighty miles asunder, and not by each other's side." "Forget them, my own true-hearted Wife!" "Ah! if I were beside you, I would soon make up the peace." Propounds a "wild scheme," a scheme of "judicious desperation." "If I get a house in the country, why should it not be yours also?" "Are we not wealth and health and all blessedness to one another?" . . . 243-252

LETTER 157. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 16 March, 1826

Would accept Carlyle's offer, without fear or misgiving, and deem herself the richest, best-lodged lady in the land; but she cannot leave her Mother. And her Mother's presence there (in the Annandale cottage) "would be a perpetual

cloud over our little world of peace and love.”—Propounds a counter scheme : that a house be taken in the vicinity of Edinburgh, and that all three should live together. If Carlyle will agree to this, she will propose the plan to her Mother 252-256

LETTER 158. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 19 March, 1826

Loves Miss Welsh better for her love of her Mother. Her plan is bright as the May morning on one side : but —. “Think of it, and leave me to think of it ; and I will send you my best deliverance in due time.”—Sends her the “Sower’s Song” 256-258

LETTER 159. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 2 April, 1826

Before saying what he thinks of Miss Welsh’s scheme, he will tell her what his own was : Having secured Scotsbrig, and finished his translation, he was to kneel down before her and ask her hand, then carry her off into the wolds of Annandale, into this Kamtschatka establishment. Here they might contrive to weather it till the winter season. Then, or at Whitsunday, they might go northward and begin housekeeping on their own foundation. He would have £200 at any rate, to begin with. His sister Jane might have gone with them and helped her new sister ; an ancient thrifty servant would have completed the establishment.—The grand objection to Miss Welsh’s plan would be the presence of her Mother : “The man should bear rule in the house, and not the woman” 258-265

LETTER 160. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 10 April, 1826

Tells Carlyle that her Mother does not object to her wedding him in his actual circumstances ; on the contrary, her Mother thinks it, all things considered, the best she can do ; nor does she object to her living with him in his Fatherland.—Her plan (of the three living together) could have had no permanency, for her Mother will be required at Templand ere long. In going now, she is only anticipating what must be her ultimate destination.—“Are you happy ? You must be the most ungrateful of mortals, if you are not, in the prospect of having *such* a Wife !”—Two postscripts, one by Mrs. Welsh, the other by Miss Welsh 265-268

LETTER 161. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 22 April, 1826

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Discusses plans for a residence.—Would much prefer to retain the Haddington house a little longer, and live there for a short time, to taking up house in Edinburgh.—He would not, however, restrain her projected removal from her native Town. “The fancied happiness of living there was founded on the thought that you too would be happier; without this Haddington was no heaven to me either.” He thinks Miss Welsh and her Mother should go to Edinburgh, since their tastes are so decided against Haddington; but for him and Miss Welsh to take up house there, would for the present be delusion. “Be kind, be tolerant, be just to me, till you have *heard* me. If we are wise and true, all will yet be well” . . . 271-276

LETTER 162. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 6 May, 1826

Remonstrates with Miss Welsh for her long silence. “Write to me without delay, if our common interests are still dear to you.” “Nothing that you can calmly propose to me will not find a ready and wistful hearing.” “O my Beloved, you are forever dear to me, betide us what may. I could write volumes, and this, as always, would be the meaning of them” . . . 277-279

LETTER 163. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 9 May, 1826

Has been long silent because, “In the state of helpless uncertainty into which you and my Mother together had plunged me back from what seemed the very summit of waking bliss, I felt myself utterly at a loss what to say or do next.”—“Ceased to love you! O thou of little faith!”—Discusses ways and means; refers to the delicate relation she stands in with her Mother . . . 280-283

LETTER 164. CARLYLE—Hoddam Hill, 13 May, 1826

Discusses, he hopes for the last time, the house problem.—Gives reasons against their taking up house at Scotsbrig. Forebodings from his Father and Mother that it would be difficult for them to live there even in summer, in winter, impossible.—Why he had thought Haddington preferable. Has no special love for that Town. Would

infinitely prefer a house in Edinburgh, on the same principles.—Asks if Miss Welsh cannot procure such a house in Edinburgh, or revise her judgment as to Haddington. If she cannot, they must just wait till their means increase, or they have learned to be content with these as they are.—The determination rests with her and her Mother 283-293

LETTER 165. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 18 June, 1826

How many thousand thoughts might Miss Welsh's Letter (now lost) give rise to ! "We are, it seems, to begin this wonderful married life ; a scene so strange to both of us, so full of hazards, and it may be of highest happiness ! May the Fates award the latter ; as they will, if we deserve it."—He has not been so happy for many a year, as since he began this undertaking ("German Romance") on his own strength and in his own home.—"The next book I write, *another* shall help me to correct and arrange !" "Let us not despond in the life of honourable toil which lies before us." "In labour lies health of body and of mind ; in suffering and difficulty is the soil of all virtue and wisdom." "Let us be true and good, and we have nothing earthly to dread."—Agrees with Miss Welsh in heartily recoiling from the fuss and formalities of the Wedding ceremony.—Asks her to tell him about the house she has taken.—Has about the fifth part of his last volume done 293-299

LETTER 166. MISS WELSH—Haddington, 28 June, 1826

It will be our own faults, if the arrangement does not do excellently well. "Our anticipated happiness . . . is no love-dream from which we must awake the first year of our marriage."—"It is now five years since we first met—five blessed years ! During all that period my opinion of you has never *wavered*, but gone on deliberately rising to a higher and higher degree of regard."—Says that Carlyle has loved her, not in blindness of her faults, but in spite of them, for her one redeeming grace, her faith in him. "Oh, without doubt, we shall be happy as the day is long ; happier in our little house at Comley Bank than kings and queens amid the gilding of palaces. Are you believing ? I could easily convince you with my

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eyes and kisses ; but ink words are so ineloquent ! ” —
Gives Carlyle a full description of 21 Comley Bank 299-302

LETTER 167. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 19 July, 1826

Had they been young lovers, Jane might have had just cause of offence at his long silence in return for so kind and altogether balmy a Letter as her last. But they are old lovers, just finishing the process of courtship, and going to be married, so he stands sword-proof before her, shielded in her own arms against all perils.—The truth is, the longer he is in writing the sooner he will be with her.—He has been over-working, and injuring his health, but is learning to relax a little.—The moral of the “Two Swallows,” who have built a house (not at Comley Bank), and are bringing up a family in the highest contentment. “Surely, Jane Welsh and Thomas Carlyle, here as they stand, have in them conjunctly the wisdom of many swallows ! Let them exercise it then, in God’s name, and live happy as these birds of passage are doing ! It is not Nature that made men unhappy ; but their own despicable perversities.”—“Let us not be foolish but wise, and all will be well !” 302-307

LETTER 168. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 12 August, 1826

Has been forced to disappoint both Miss Welsh and himself by not writing sooner. “At any rate, what is the matter whether I write or not ? Are you not always in my heart and thoughts, and am not I always in yours, my little Dearest ; and are we not soon to be joined in the holiest and closest bonds forevermore ? ”—“What more can I say ? Kiss thee with a true kiss, which means : Look in thy own heart, there thou wilt read it all ” . . . 308-312

LETTER 169. MISS WELSH—Templand, 31 August, 1826

Arrived at Templand in such a shattered condition that she would hang herself but for certain considerations. “From flitting, then, Good Lord, deliver us ! ”—“Mercy ! to think we have not seen each other for a whole year ; and once no more than sixteen British miles betwixt us ! Oh glorious instance of patience and long-suffering ! And the annals of our courtship afford many such. But in the other and better world we are about to enter, these

Job-inflctions will be all forgotten, or remembered merely as a passing dream."—The house at Comley Bank at length completed. It looks pretty, convenient, and likely to answer well.—Mrs. Montagu's kind message to Carlyle 313, 314

LETTER 170. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 4 September, 1826

Will see Miss Welsh at Templand, and discuss the whole mystery of their Fortune, now one and indivisible.—
"Good-night, Darling! And may the Giver of all good be with you!" 315, 316

LETTER 171. CARLYLE—19 September, 1826

Writes "in haste and headache."—Has been attending to business affairs.—Can they depend on getting Post-horses and chaises all the way to Edinburgh, or would it not be better to take seats in the coach for some part of the way? "At all events, tell me your *taste* in the business; for the coach *is* sure if the other is not."—"There will be neither peace nor rest till we two are *one*, till I have my own true Jane far away from a thousand grating circumstances that have long oppressed her heart and have embittered mine the instant I came within their sphere."—"I swear we shall be happy: for I love thee; and with all my faults can never cease to love thee in heart, and in heart to long for thy good. Believe this, for it is true; and let it be an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast as thy love is of me" 317-321

LETTER 172. MISS WELSH—Templand,
23 September, 1826

Cannot name the Wedding day till she hear from her Mother, who has gone to Edinburgh to get white gowns, which might have been got with all convenience when they were there last month. But some people are wise, and some are otherwise.—Will be glad to get the gowns in any way. It would be a bad omen to marry in mourning. "When I put it on six years ago, I thought to wear it forever. But I have found a second Father, and it would be ungrateful not to show even externally how much I rejoice in him."—Would much prefer a private chaise to the public coach for their journey to Edinburgh.—A faintness and cold shudder come over her at the thought

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LETTER 173. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 27 September, 1826

Is reading Kant's transcendental Philosophy, in this wind-bound portion of his voyage, with a view to instructing his benighted countrymen on the merits of this sublime system, at some more propitious season.—But he is fallen from the pure regions of Art into the boggy Syrtis of Session Clerks, Tailors and Post-keepers. There is no literary projection possible in his present circumstances.—He believes they are taking the impending ceremony too much to heart.—“Take courage, then, my Darling; and let no ‘cold shudder’ come over you, and call not this an ‘odious ceremony,’ but rather a blessed ordinance, sanctioning by earthly laws what is already sanctioned in heaven, uniting two souls for worldly joy and woe, which in God's sight have chosen one another from amongst all men. Can any road be dark which is leading thither?” As to the arrangements generally, he tells Miss Welsh: “Let me know your will, and it shall be my pleasure; and so by the blessing of Heaven we shall roll along side by side with the speed of Post-horses, till we reach Comley Bank.”—Stipulates only that he may be allowed to smoke three cigars by the way.—His Mother's prayers (to speak in all seriousness) will not be wanting to either himself or Miss Welsh.—His Mother “will have one good *greet* when we set off, and then be at peace” 323-327

LETTER 174. MISS WELSH (to MRS. GEORGE WELSH)—Templand, 1 October, 1826

Tells her Aunt that her Intended possesses all the qualities she deems essential in *her* Husband: a warm heart to love her, a towering intellect to command her, and a spirit of fire to be the guiding-star of her life. “Will you like him? No matter whether you do or not,—since I like him in the deepest part of my soul” . . . 328-330

LETTER 175. MISS WELSH—Templand, 3 October, 1826

“Unkind that you are ever to suffer me to be cast down, when it is so easy a thing for you to lift me to the Seventh Heaven! My soul was darker than midnight, when

your pen said 'let there be light.' . . . And now I am resolved in spirit and even joyful."—"Oh, my Dearest Friend, be always *so* good to me, and I shall make the best and happiest Wife."—She is going to be really a very meek-tempered Wife.—"And this is my last Letter! How terrible, and yet full of bliss! You will love me forever, will you not, my own Husband? And I will always be your true and affectionate Jane Welsh" . 330-334

LETTER 176. CARLYLE—Scotsbrig, 9 October, 1826

Received Miss Welsh's "Last Speech and *marrying* words"; and "truly a most delightful and swan-like melody was in them; a tenderness and warm devoted trust, worthy of such a maiden bidding farewell to the (unmarried) Earth, of which she was the fairest ornament. Dear little Child! How is it that I have deserved thee; deserved a purer and nobler heart than falls to the lot of millions? I swear I will love thee with *my* whole heart, and think my life well spent if it can make thine happy."—He has got the certificate of celibacy.—"Would we were off and away, three months before all these observances of the ceremonial law! Yet fear not, Darling; for it must and will all be accomplished."—"I could say much; and what were words to the sea of thoughts that rolls thro' my heart, when I feel that thou art mine, and that I am thine, that henceforth we live not for ourselves but for each other!"—"My last blessing as a Lover is with you; this is my last Letter to Jane Welsh: my first blessing as a Husband, my first kiss to Jane Carlyle is at hand! O my Darling! I will always love thee. Good-night then, for the last time we have to part! In a week I see you, in a week you are my own! Adieu, *meine Eigene!*" 335-337

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THE LOVE LETTERS OF THOMAS
CARLYLE AND JANE WELSH—II

THE LOVE LETTERS OF THOMAS CARLYLE AND JANE WELSH

LETTER 101

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie¹ Welsh, Templand

BIRMINGHAM, 2 September, 1824.

MEINE LIEBE, — Your Letter, you will easily believe, delivered me from a thousand perplexities. I could have sworn, when old Barnet came tottering in with it, that some dreadful calamity was to be revealed; that you were sick or unhappy, or, what was little better for the time, that you were out of humour with me, and about to give me my discharge. No one of these fine things was true! You are still good, still kind, still sending me assurances that you are good and kind. Blessed be Cadmus King of Thebes that first imported letters into Europe; blessed be my true-hearted Jane that makes such noble use of that invention! Tho' parted, we are still together; you transport me from the smoky furnaces of Birmingham, home to clear skies and souls that love me; I live with you for a season in scenes we have both lived in, and bright

¹ While at Templand, Miss Welsh preferred to have her letters addressed with Baillie in her name, because her aunt who lived there was also named "Jeannie Welsh."

recollections give birth to brighter hopes. Blessings on your head my bonny bairn ! You have long been good to me : I pray more and more earnestly that you may always be so.

What a strange tragi-comedy is that of Dugald G——, which you describe so neatly and with such graphic touches ! Poor soul ! one knows not whether to laugh at him or to weep for him ; his heart seems so affectionate and innocent, and at the same time so *very* weak. I trust, for his own sake, he will trouble you no more : it is painful to be the cause of pain ; but with you there is no remedy. “ Therein the patient must minister unto himself.” Another year or two will show your unhappy friend that the Earth is not entirely a bower of roses and myrtles ; and that men have many thousand things to do and to endure which love has no concern with. I feel for the poor youth ; his lesson will be hard but not un instructive or useless. The visions of eighteen are beautiful as the path of Aurora ; but transient and baseless as they are beautiful. A little while and the glories of the East are clean gone ; and after all, what matters it so much whether one fell gust of tempest or the silent march of the Hours have chased them away ? Yet tell me if you hear again of Dugald : I love a kind nature, and feel for its sorrows not less because I know that universal Destiny not single accidents is to be blamed for them. For *your* conduct in the matter, I should admire it, tho’ I had no further interest in it. What a pretty mixture of mercy and gracefulness and female cunning ! So, you are *engaged*, are you ? Would that I had a cast of the Sibylline Books, or the Linen Books, or the future Session Books, or any Book that would tell me to whom ! Is he a genius and

“elegant”? Is he a poet or a philosopher or both in one? Let him look to it that he be a worthy man, and love you with a faithful heart! If he do not, I myself will pull the varlet’s nose, and tell him that he merits not to dwell upon our planet. Well! ere long, old Time will try: how many things will he try!

But I must leave my speculation, and take to practice. What are you about in Nithsdale; what are you employed in or amused with? Have you taken into serious deliberation the task I assigned you? I am still as bold on it as ever; I can yet admit of no denial. Tell me soon and punctually what I am to look for. Fear not to speak to me of indolence and tardiness: ever since I came to Warwickshire, I have been the idlest man myself in the United Kingdoms. *Schiller* is still, except some vague ideas and a few faint and altogether bootless attempts at translation, exactly where he was. My learned Bibliopolists are on their side not a whit more active: it was but this very morning that I received their final ratification of our bargain; their books, from Bohte and other Germans, are still to come “in a day or two.” Blame me not, dearest Jane! I feel deeply enough that life is short and art long;¹ and Oh how small, very small a way have I yet advanced in this same art! Nevertheless, Badams and physical prescriptions and the Devil and my own foolish heart keep me as it were enchanted to the spot. *Nondum*, should be my motto, with Poppies argent and three Sloths dormant on a Tree disleaved! I do little but ride and sleep and read the most unutterable trash of novels, cursing as I read. Badams says I am re-

¹ “Vita brevis est, longa ars.” — SENECA, “De Brevit. Vit.” 1.

covering: the perpetual gnawing of pain with its confused irritation and obscuration of the soul has in truth I think somewhat left me; but weariness and weakness and a passion for repose have succeeded. I am growing quite an Asiatic; I seem as if I could dream away my life amid citron groves and the perfumes and spice-trees of the East; with visions in my silly head, such as all poetry and all painting and all harmony were but feeble to express. And alas! this is not "Araby the Blest,"¹ but brick-built sooty *Brumachem*; nor am I a genie of King Solomon,² but a helpless dyspeptical philosopher from the moors of Annandale! After all it were better for me to be quiet: there is a progress in all things; and if I reach but the fiftieth part of what I sometimes meditate, I shall be a happy man. This pitiful Book must be printed in November; then: "Tomorrow to fresh fields and pastures new!"³ I tell thee, our culture is but as it were beginning; there are regions of thought and feeling which have scarcely as yet loomed on the edge of our horizon; thither let us tend unswervingly, never, never parting by the way! What may we not accomplish! In hours of happy musing, I figure myself as the interpreter of truth and manly integrity and imaginative beauty to thousands of my fellow men; and Jane, my fair and pure Egeria,

¹ "Sabeian odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest."

"Paradise Lost," Bk. iv. 162-3.

² Solomon, King of Israel, in addition to being "the wisest man the world ere saw," was credited, by some writers more recent than those of the Bible, with having in his service spirits (genii) of the invisible world. — See, for example, the "Arabian Nights."

³ "Tomorrow to fresh woods and pastures new." — MILTON, "Lycidas," 193.

my inspiring Goddess of the Fountain, to originate, to perfect, adorn and recompense my labours ! Call this gasconading and vain dreaming : I know it is, my Dearest ; yet something of it *may* be realized ; and if we both live, *shall*.

I heard of you since you wrote to me : the Orator was here two days ago, and said he had been corresponding with you. He did not seem to feel particularly gratified by the ditty you had sung to him : he said " he once thought you had no other view but to laugh at him." By degrees, however, it appeared, he had taken up a more rational interpretation of the matter, and written to you, assuring you that you were wrong, and he not less your friend than ever. It must be owned the man is nearly mad on some points, especially on that of writing Letters. He said he was ever ready at a moment's warning to *do* everything in his power for his friends ; but that he really had no time or topics to *write*. I scouted the idea of *time* ; and told him that as to *doing*, none but Prime Ministers and Asiatic Monarchs could pretend to make or keep friends by that expensive method. I teased him and posed him, as we rode along together to the Leasowes, till he drew down the corners of his mouth, and growled in a style too ominous for my proceeding farther. I do not know that he will yet reform ; nor is it of essential moment. Of his friendship for you and me I no more doubt than I do of our own ; it should be our part to pardon him a multitude of faults and affectations, as we ourselves may have a multitude to be pardoned. Tell me how you feel towards him, and that you have forgiven him. Of late he has occupied too many paragraphs of my Letters : but I hold any

semblance of a friend, however distant it may be, too precious to be parted with for any price; and I cannot rest till I have made the offender's peace with you. Do, let us *all* love one another! The world is but a peopled solitude, without kind affections; and of these, how few hearts in it are even partially susceptible! This Orator will mend, must mend in time, as the carriages and coronets forsake him; he is already half recovered since I saw him in the north.

Doubtless, my Dearest, you will come to London; and I of course will fly from your approach as from the pestilence! In London you will find a thousand things to draw improvement from; characters to study and emulate, modes of life to investigate, knowledge of all sorts to make your own. Many times I wished and prayed you had been there, tho' it had been only for a little space; I am still bent on being your cicerone, still confident in your employing me. This matter must be studied farther: we will have it all arranged in time. Of my stay in London, or proceedings there, I can yet say little definite. My first movement must be farther to the south. Mrs. Strachey and the Orator have been combining a watering party to go down to Kent for five or six weeks, and I have almost consented to be one of them. I expect we shall be happy in some degree, tho' excepting these two leaders of the expedition, there is no other whom I value very highly. Mrs. Strachey must know *you* in due time, and love you when she knows you. She is a woman of no ordinary faculties; earnest, warm-hearted, decisive, contemptuous of all that is insignificant and mean, reverential of all that is great and noble. She is Mrs. Buller's Sister; but no more like her than the dia-

mond of Golconda is to that of Bristol. She and I almost *swore a friendship* for one another at our second interview! This from a religious lady, with a revenue of five thousand pounds per annum! In time, I fear she will become a sceptic; she likes Irving, but sees and laughs at all his vagaries. In three weeks I will tell you more.

For the present, however, I must be done. Tho' I write in a type almost invisibly small, my paper is on the point of ending. These are but points and heads of intelligence; I have not head enough to put them into better order. Pardon them for their confusion and inanity; what skills it how *we* write to one another, so we write enough, and with sufficient want of care! You will send me tidings instantly? Consider, *Liebchen*, by all laws human and divine, you are a Letter in my debt: a fortnight also used to be *the time*; why should it be lengthened? But is it not already three weeks since you wrote? Take your pen the first moment you can spare; about the twentieth of this month, I shall be leaving Birmingham. Tell me all that you are doing and concerned with. What is this of the Doctor body? I fear I shall begin to hate the Doctor, if he carry not his little spiritie in a more honest fashion. What has the thing been doing? Tell me fully when you write. Perhaps I over-rate the matter, for his deeds *can* scarcely be of any moment: nevertheless tell me. Has the unhappy mortal been telling lies of you, or what? For *me* within very large limits, he is altogether welcome; but for you it is different.—What wise people are the W——s with their baby Officer! Did not your heart leap for joy at such a brilliant destiny? Seriously, these things are more than jokes.

Tell me punctually about that Schiller and his poems. Do not hesitate; for you *must*. Fix upon something, or if you cannot, explain yourself fully and I will help you. It must be done, Love; the Book comes out in winter; and my little "J. W." comes in the middle of it. So take your measures, Madam; and see you get out of this entanglement as best you may. Set to work and write your verses, and mine will encircle them, and protect them, and "*deave*¹ the flattery."

How is your Mother, and how do you relish Nithsdale? I expect your news impatiently. Will you keep me anxious? No, you will not; seeing you are the best young woman now alive, and I am,

Yours forever and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

My kindest regards to your Mother: she is happy with her friends; let me hope you too find something to delight you. Did you bring books with you? Think of *Schiller*, and yourself and me, and be good and happy. God bless you, Dearest!

LETTER 102

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, C/o J. Badams, Esq.,
Birmingham*

TEMPLAND, 17 September, '1824.'

DEAREST FRIEND,—I began a Letter to you last Post-day, but it pleased the Devil I should only write a dozen lines of it: some she people came

¹ Deafen or stupefy by noise or clamour.

to call, and the Mail passed by before I could get away from them. So now it is likely you will be gone from Birmingham before my Letter reaches it. *N'importe*, your Doctor will know where you are to be found.

I have a great many things to tell you, and little time to tell them in. In the first place, I have got a new Brother! so unlike me, and yet we love each other dearly. His name is Baillie, and he is my Mother's Cousin-german. I mentioned him (I think) when I wrote last; but I had then seen him only for a day; and at the outset of our acquaintance, I hardly liked him. I could not but admire his figure, so gracefully noble, his handsome countenance, — the handsomest I ever saw or fancied, — his brilliancy, native elegance and courtly polish; but I was magnanimously resolved not to suffer myself to be caught by a dazzling exterior; and his internal qualities I esteemed at a very low rate. I mistook his fashionable breeding for his real character, and as he did not wear his heart upon his sleeve, I concluded without the smallest ceremony, that he was heartless. Besides I had heard that Lady Jane P—— and Miss W——, who was asked in marriage by a Prince of the Blood, would have given their little fingers to get this elegant Mr. Baillie for a Husband; and I thought it would be highly creditable for *me* to be more difficult to please than the highest-born Lady and richest Heiress in the land.

Now, don't you think I deserved to fall seriously in love with him as a punishment for my sauciness? I believe nothing but his want of genius could have saved me; for in the month we have lived together I have found him more and more amiable every

day. He is as generous and affectionate in his nature as the Orator, and more delicate and tender. He has a quick intellect, a most refined taste, and wit more graceful and good-humoured than Mr. Terrot's and quite as brilliant. In short, he is my beau-ideal in every respect except that he has no genius! He does not even reverence that quality in others. What a pity! or rather what a mercy! for he is to be married in a month or two to one of the loveliest and most accomplished women in England; and I have no passion for hanging myself in my garters, like my namesake, the "unfortunate Miss Baillie."¹ As it is I am likely to have much enjoyment in this new acquaintance, — provided his Wife does not prove a "dear Isabella." It is settled that as soon as may be after his marriage, I am to visit him either in London or at his place near Brighton; and there I shall be introduced into the *Great world*, and its novelty will doubtless charm me for a time, tho' I am pretty sure it will have no abiding attraction for me. — Here is another fine *Château en Espagne*! God grant it may not share the fate of the last! The Orator says in his pathetic epistle to me, "That as soon as his house is ready for the accommodation of a *lady*, I shall hear from him; or if I have forgotten to believe him,

¹ In allusion to the old ballad, "The Unfortunate Miss Bailey," current in the early years of the last century. It begins thus:

"A captain bold of Halifax, who dwelt in country quarters,
Seduced a maid, who hanged herself one morning in her garters.

Oh, Miss Bailey! Unfortunate Miss Bailey!"

Byron cites the first line of this ballad in the appendix to volume i. of "Childe Harold" (Murray, London, 1821), and also the refrain, "Oh, Miss Bailey! Unfortunate Miss Bailey!"

from one whose constancy of promise and affection, I as well as he, have had reason to *admire!*" Well! in case of his writing me *very* kindly, I was planning to stay a few weeks with him, on my way to Brighton; but my Cousin says I shall do no such thing; that after having lived with Mr. Irving I will be blue and evangelical past redemption, and that he does not want me to be instituting family worship in his house and reforming his whole *ménage*. I do not know how it will be arranged, or if it will be arranged at all. I wish most devoutly it may; for I am quite tired out with my present manner of life. I think, for the last six weeks, my Mother has not once been in the same humour for two hours at a time; and then her jealousy of me is so intolerable that I am actually frightened when any one shows me kindness: *ne puis*, I suppose I shall grow philosophical by and by.

You ask what I am doing. Wonders, I assure you. I get out of bed when "the day is *aired*," walk, trifle, or play chess in the forenoons, *écarté* in the evenings; and fall asleep upon the comfortable reflexion of having lost another day. I brought Goethe's *Memoirs* and Schiller's *Gedichte* along with me, but I have made hardly any way in either. I have not the least hope of being able to execute the task you assign me, as I cannot even translate the poems into prose; nevertheless, I will *try* anything you please: it is only failing, and one had better fail in a difficult enterprise than in an easy one. Write me a good round scold, will you? I stand very much in need of it.

I saw *Him*¹ as I passed thro' Edinburgh, and (will you believe it?) I did not like him a bit: either

¹ The artist "Benjamin B." — See *ante*, Letter 27.

he is much altered for the worse or my standard of men is immensely improved since I saw him last. I don't know which, but certain it is, the vulgarity of his face and the volley of nonsense he talked, gave a shock to my nervous system, which it did not recover from for four-and-twenty hours. — I am in great haste today as you need not to be told. Excuse me this once, and I will not send you such another brief and untidy epistle for twelve months to come. Write, my Darling, as soon as ever you can, and more largely than I have any *right* to expect. I have great need at present of all the consolation which your affectionate Letters afford me. Address to me here: I shall not get away till the Festival, which is to be some time in the end of October. — I must reserve my histories of the G——s and the little Doctor, till my next. But keep yourself easy: he has been telling no lies of me. Tell me all you are doing. You are not to like any of these fine ladies so well as me, remember; for none of them can like *you* half as well as I do. Is there any decent review of *Meister*? I have seen only one,¹ in the *London Magazine*; it did not make me angry. I should have grieved to see you well-treated in the same page where Goethe was handled so unworthily.

Forever affectionately yours,
JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

¹ A very unfavourable review of “*Meister*,” by De Quincey.

LETTER 103

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

2, LIVERPOOL TERRACE, DOVER,
5 October, 1824.

MY DEAR, — I am sure if you knew with what eagerness I look for your Letters, you would take a pleasure in writing to me more frequently. For some hours after a Letter from you arrives, there are few happier men in England than I: the distresses and vexations that keep up almost a perpetual firing in my inward world, making me in general the dreariest and sulkiest person in the parish, for a while withdraw their black squadrons; the sun of hope comes forth in vernal beauty, and light and affection and peace hover over the scenes of my imagination. Is it you that are an enchantress or I that am a weakling? Neither: it is simply that we love one another; and that love and kindly feelings even in this world can make crooked things straight and rough places plain.

Your last Letter found me on a quiet Sunday morning at Birmingham, meditating a speedy departure to the South. Had I answered it then, as I at first proposed, I should have written with much more composure and singleness of mind than I can hope to do at present; but preparations and arrangements violently displaced my purpose; and ever since my inward, like my outward man, has been hurried in speedy vehicles from place to place, without leisure to think of Jane or anything so precious to me, with the smallest continuity. I had ugly weather for my London journey; I passed

thro' Stratford-upon-Avon, I saw the house where the infant Shakespear was cradled, the very pavement where he spun his tops; I looked also upon the old monastic domes and minarets of Oxford; but sick nerves and pelting rain were fast banishing all romance from my feelings; I at length retired from the "roof" of the conveniency, postponing the picturesque to the comfortable; was annoyed to death by the cackle of a French blue-stocking, and arrived at Pentonville in a state of mind truly sulphurous. The good Orator was sitting like a bittern by the pools of water; Isabella with Miss Kirkpatrick¹ and "him" (not your *him*, but one whom I have since known to my cost) had set out for Dover, carrying all the household gear along with them, and leaving the venerable Pastor in the desolation as of a sacked city, to follow them two days afterwards. I had books to get and much pitiful business to settle with Turks of Booksellers; so I did not follow him till last Thursday, and it is yet scarce two days since I recovered anything like my usual frame of mind. The strange sights and the much cattle I have seen, I defer speaking of till we meet face to face, when I will tell you everything in all its breadth and length. My own small circle of present objects and present occupations is all I can undertake on paper.

We are here a very social and prospectively a very pleasant party. The strength of our forces, however, is not yet arrived. Mrs. Strachey and her Husband and *suite* do not come till Thursday, when some new disposition of our quarters will be necessary, and time must elapse before we are all settled on a proper footing. For the present, we

¹ For a short account of this lady see Appendix B, Note Four.



KITTY KIRKPATRICK

are all Miss Kirkpatrick's guests; that young lady, Mrs. Strachey's Cousin, having gone before to convoy "Isabella," and provide a house, and now not judging it suitable to be left there till her friends arrive. This Kitty is a singular and very pleasing creature; a little black-eyed, auburn-haired, brunette, full of kindness and humour, and who never I believe was angry at any creature for a moment in her life. Tho' twenty-one, and not unbeautiful, and sole Mistress of herself and fifty thousand pounds, she is meek and modest as a Quakeress; with a demure eye she surveys the *extravaganzas* of the Orator, laughing at him in secret, yet loving him as a good man, and studiously devoting herself with a diverting earnestness to provide for the household cares of the establishment. Good Kitty! . . . Would you or I were half as happy as this girl! But her Mother was a Hindoo Princess (whom her Father fought for and scaled walls for); it lies in the blood; and philosophy can do little to help us.

The Orator is busy writing, and bathing, persuading himself that he is scaling the very pinnacles of Christian sentiment, which in truth with him are little more than the very pinnacles of human vanity rising thro' an atmosphere of great native warmth and generosity. We have many and long confabulations: I find him much as he was before, and I suppose will always be; overspread with secret affectations, secret to himself, but kind and friendly and speculative and discursive as ever. You will have much to tolerate and much that will amuse you, when you see him. It would do your heart good to look at him in the character of dry-nurse to his first-born Edward! It is a feeble shapeless thing, as all children of six weeks are; yet Isabella

and her Spouse could not be more attentive to the infant Lama, were they high Priestess and Priest of Thibet. The waking and the sleeping and all the operations of "him" (as they emphatically name it) form a most important item in the general weal. "Isabella," said he, "I think *I* would wash him with *warm* water tonight?" "Yes, *Dear*," said the compliant Isabella; Kitty smirked in secret; and I made bold to dissent totally from the suggestion; declaring that in my view this was the Wife's concern alone, and that were I in her place I would wash him with oil-of-vitriol, if I pleased, and take no one's counsel on it. Oh, that you saw the giant with his broad-brimmed hat, his sallow visage, and sable matted fleece of hair, carrying the little pepper-box of a creature, folded in his monstrous palms, along the beach; tick-ticking to it, and dandling it, and every time it stirs an eye-lid, "grinning horrible a ghastly smile,"¹ heedless of the crowds of petrified spectators, that turn round in long trains gazing in silent terror at the fatherly Leviathan! You would laugh for twelve months after, every time you thought of it. And yet it is very wrong to laugh if one could help it; Nature is very lovely, pity she should ever be absurd. On the whole I am pleased with Irving; and hope to love him and admire him and laugh at him as long as I live.

But enough of him, for once! Let me turn to one far dearer. I rejoice to hear that you have found a pleasing companion for your rustication; I hope that he will prove as true a friend as you anticipate. In one point, I shall be his debtor deeply, if he do as he proposes: do make him carry you to Lon-

¹ "Paradise Lost," Bk. ii. 846.

don, and the South! It is a project that promises abundantly, and seems so easy of execution. For you it will be amusing and instructive to see so many novelties physical, intellectual and moral; for me it will be delightful to know that you are near me, to see you and speak with you and show you many wonders, as I hope to do in spite of all the artificial barriers with which you will be girt about among your fashionable friends. The gay world will interest your spirit of observation, but not your heart or its affections. That is *not* the goal towards which your ardent tho' unguided enthusiasm has all along been striving: if you marry any of these fritters of perfumery and small sarcasm, I will go far to shake hands with you for good! A fashionable wife is not perhaps more worthless than many wives are; but one views her with less toleration; she *might be* so much and *is* so very little. Nor in spite of your gay Cousin's objections must you cut the poor Orator: he confidently expects you, he loves you, and his fellowship will do you good. His affectations cannot infect your clear and active spirit for an instant; and there is a fund of sincerity in his life and character, which in these heartless aimless days, is doubly precious. The cant of religion, conscious or unconscious, is a pitiable thing, but not the most pitiable; it often rests upon a groundwork of genuine earnest feeling; and is, I think, in all except its very worst phases, preferable to that poor arid spirit of contemptuous *persiflage*, which forms the staple of fashionable accomplishment, so far as I can discern it, and spreads like a narcotic drench over all the better faculties of the soul in those that entertain it. No, my Dearest, that will not do for you! Nature meant you for more serious things, and in spite of all your wanderings,

you will yet attain them. O that I had power to form you, and form your destiny, according to my image of what you should be! O that I were a sovereign and a sage! — O that I were not a fool! What have I ever done for you, I often ask; and there is a most beggarly account, by way of answer! I have loved you three-fourths for my own sake: it is only in stern solemn hours that you seem to me like a little *Mignon*, struggling with a wild ethereal ardour for the heavenly things, which you know not, and the coarse world will not let you know; and I call bitterly on Fate to put it in my power, once, once, to set you on the right path, and help you in a contest so unequal. But what avails it? Fate is deaf and dead; and we remain shut up among the grim battlements of Necessity; and time flies over us, and we are not delivered! I often wonder that you plague yourself with me for another week. My affection for you is sincere; but it has little other value. You have more faith than I, or I should have lost you long ago.

Indeed, my Love, I will not scold you a jot. I know you will take to better courses, whenever opportunity is given you; and in the mean time, many things may be studied that are not written upon books. Enjoy yourself as much as you can; assured that time enough is in store, when difficulties may be absent and enjoyments no longer offered. You promised to study the duties of wifeness; which I assure you, are not confined to the gift of pudding-making, yet are wide enough in their extent: have you yet mastered them? We shall see when you arrive. — My own need of scolding is far greater than yours; unless it were pity or contempt that you substituted for scolding. I have been very

idle, even now I am not very busy, and my health, if recovering at all, is recovering with due deliberation. Nevertheless I believe I *shall* manage ultimately : long years of constant pain have taught me that before all other things I must subdue disease, and to this I will direct my efforts till it is subdued ; a consummation which I can and will bring about, cost what it like. I think of many plans : sometimes I am for the country, and a life of mingled rustication, riding, gardening, love and literature ! Meanwhile I am translating fragments of *Don Karlos* and the *Maid of Orleans*, the paltry *Life* being, after some sharp speech on my part, at last determined to go to press immediately on my return to Town. Will you translate me *Hero and Leander* ? Choose any other that you like better ; only try. I will tell you more next time, if this answer not. — Of *Meister* I have seen no review worth calling by the name ; tho' it has been puffed and praised in various quarters, and has met with a reception far beyond what I anticipated. A clever but careless man exalted it in *Blackwood* ; the *Opium-eater* in the *London Magazine* has done his utmost on the other side. I have not yet read his "Article," at least not further than a hasty glance at the first three leaves : but I design to do it ; tho' the man seems ill-bred in his remarks, and sufficiently shallow, there may be a grain of information in that dusty chaff, and *fas est et ab hoste doceri* [it is right to learn even from an enemy].¹ On the whole, to be reviewed, I find, is a mighty simple matter ; one of Badams's emollients is as bad as fifty "articles." —

Now you promised a large batch of news : when, pray, am I to have it ? Do, write immediately, and

¹ OVID, "Metam.," iv. 428.

at *exceeding great* length. Tell me about your journey hitherward, about all you think of or care for. For this once I have done: farewell, my Dearest! *Vale et me ama!* I am yours forever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 104

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, 2, Liverpool Terrace,
Dover*

TEMPLAND, 14 October, '1824.'

"MY DEAR," — I do think I should have gone demented if your Letter had not come on Monday. While little Jock was away at the Post-office, I had out my watch at least fifty times; and when I saw him coming along the road, my heart beat so loud you might have heard it at Dover. Why do you put my patience so often to the test? You know well enough it is not my most abundant virtue. You are continually chiding me for writing seldom: I am sure I have reason to complain of you on the same account; and this laziness is more inexcusable in you than in me. In the midst of new scenes and new friends, you have a thousand pleasures independent of my Letters; but it is very different with me: *I* have no pleasure in life but what your Letters afford me. Do think of this!

I congratulate you on your present situation. With such a picture of domestic felicity before your eyes, and this "singular and very pleasing creature" to charm away the blue-devils, you can hardly fail to be as happy as the day is long. Miss Kitty Kirkpatrick — Lord what an ugly name! "Good

Kitty" ! Oh, pretty, dear, delightful Kitty ! I am not a bit jealous of her, not I indeed, — Hindoo Princess tho' she be ! Only you may as well never let me hear you mention her name again.

I wonder when *I* shall see this delightful "South," where everybody finds friends. From what my Cousin writes to me, his marriage seems likely to hang some time in the wind. When it does take place, who knows that his *dear Charlotte* will approve our project ? I fear there is nothing certain to hope for from him. The Orator, you say, expects me. I am willing to believe he does. But the Orator has only *one* voice in the matter ; his Wife has the other ; and his Wife I have obliged too deeply to hope for kindness from her ! Depend upon it, the Orator's good intentions towards me will evaporate next season as they did the last. When the time for my visit arrives, his house will still be "unfit for the accommodation of a lady."

Well, if I do not go, I shall derive at least *one* advantage from my disappointment : I shall escape the danger of becoming "a fashionable wife." Oh, thou goose ! to fancy for an instant that I could end in this ! If I marry a fine-gentleman you will have nothing more to say to me. Are you mad, "Dear" ! Has Miss Kitty Kirkpatrick turned your head ? Really, I should just as soon think of marrying some inhabitant of the Frozen Regions, who could not exist out of a climate which I should shiver to death in ; who could speak nothing but a strange tongue which I did not understand, and had no capacity for acquiring. A fashionable wife ! Oh ! never will I be anything so heartless ! I have pictured for myself a far higher destiny than this. — Will it ever be more than a picture ? Shall I ever

have the wish of my heart fulfilled? A "sweet home" calmly embosomed in some romantic vale; with wealth enough to realize my ideal of elegant comfort; with books, statues, paintings and all things suitable to a tasteful, intellectual manner of life; with the friendship and society of a few, whose conversation would improve the faculties of my head and heart; and with *One* to be the polar star of my being,—one warm-hearted, high-minded, *dearest* Friend, whose sublime genius would shed an ennobling influence on all around him; whose graceful and splendid qualities would inspire a love that should be the heart and soul of my life! Such happiness is possible; and alas! it is next to impossible to assemble the circumstances which compose it. But *nil desperandum!*—my motto is Hope.

And much need have I, at present, to keep it in my mind's eye, that I may behave with becoming philosophy. My life is a continual sacrificing of my inclinations and opinions, for peace's sake; and there is no peace after all! *Eh, bien!* if it please God to spare me till after the Festival, I shall take a course different from any I have followed hitherto. *Hero and Leander*: I will try it as soon as I am settled; but at present I am too idle to have time to open a book. *Grace à Dieu!* I go to Edinburgh on Monday. My Mother joins me there about a fortnight hence, with her protégé Miss G. *She* is to stay with us all Winter! and I am to be her governess, it seems. So my Mother has arranged it; and I cannot say that I am particularly delighted with the prospect. Catherine G. is a very good little girl, in her way; but she is no *companion* for me: and as a *pupil* she will be a grievous tax upon

my time. Besides, her being with us, will be a continual pretext for her Brother's visits; and I find her Brother is a fool, whom one cannot see too seldom. Only think! after he left Haddington, he insisted with Mr. Baillie that I had *flaxen* hair! And this is not his only offence: he pesters me with nonsensical, whining, ill-spelt Letters. However, there is no remedy. My Mother is so extravagantly fond of this white-haired couple, that she seems to have no aim in existence at present but to serve them. The only comfort I have, is a faint hope that Doctor Fyffe may knock Mr. G.'s brains out, and be hanged himself for the murder. I should thus be quit of two very great plagues at once.

You must know the poor little Doctor is as jealous of me still as if we were man and wife. When he saw the Highlander¹ day after day, going into our house and coming out of it, he could not maintain his majestic silence any longer. He wrote me in his usual mock-heroic strain, imploring that I would meet him, curse him, and part with him forever. I could have indulged him in all this without putting any great violence on my feelings; but, you know, you had prohibited me from *swearing* upon any account. Moreover, he reminded me of a *vow* which he had made in one of his paroxisms of despair, — *videlicet*, that if I would not marry him, he would never marry another; and it seemed as if he would fain persuade me that "this sacred oath, tho' sworn by one, had bound us both";² for he says, after heaping imprecations on his own head,

¹ That is, "Dugald G."

² "Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,
Though sworn by one, hath bound us both."

BYRON, "Bride of Abydos," canto i. 349-50.

that but for him, I *might live, love another, and be happy*. You may believe, I was greatly astonished to find that such serious matters as my *life* and *happiness* depended on Dr. Fyffe! Poor little man! he really gave me credit for more humanity than I possessed. I was never once discomposing myself about either him or his "vow." And so I told him in my answer to his Letter, assuring him at the same time that he was quite at liberty to marry whomsoever he pleased; as what he said when he was in a fit of passion was no more binding than if it had been said in a fit of drunkenness or delirium. Moreover, I used the freedom to suggest to him that no sensible man would shackle his free will with *vows*; seeing that nature and fate already cast too many obstacles in the way of his wishes. One might have expected he would have felt some gratitude to me for taking all this trouble. Instead of that, what do you think the little viper did? He packed up all the scraps of my handwriting which he had in his possession, with a great quantity of other relics equally precious, and sent them to me with the worst-bred Letter I ever read in my life! It is now all gone out of my head, except the concluding words, "When you want a friend, and know not where to find one, look towards me!" Magnanimous Doctor! I think I shall be badly off indeed, when I turn my eyes in his direction. Is this his last explosion, think you? He really hurts my nerves. —

And now I must leave off; for I have a great many parting visits to make; and my trunks to pack in the evening. Tomorrow I go to Major Crichton's,¹ and from thence direct to Edinburgh.

¹ Factor to the Duke of Queensberry, living at Dabton, near Thornhill.

Will you write *immediately*, so that your Letter may be in Edinburgh before the 30th; in which case I shall have it *all to myself*. Give my love to the Orator, and say I was content with his Letter. Do you think he wishes to hear from me again? If I thought so I would write; but I have no notion of sending my Letters to people that do not care for them. Kiss "*him*" for me. I would not do it myself for five guineas. Young children are such nasty little beasts!

Address to 22 George Square; and for Godsake write *immediately*. You will hardly be able to decipher this abominable scrawl. I have been imitating *your* hand all the time, that I might have more room. — God bless you, Dearest: never forget me. — Yours *auf ewig*,

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

LETTER 105

*T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, 22 George Square,
Edinburgh*

PARIS, HÔTEL DE WAGRAM, 28 October, 1824.

"PARIS?" I hear you exclaim: "Unhappy soul! what has taken *thee* to Paris? Art thou frantic? Art thou dreaming? Or has the Hindoo Princess actually bewitched thee that thou hast brought thy acid visage and most atrabiliar philosophy into this land of fops and pastry-cooks, where Vanity and Sensuality have set up their chosen shrine, and every one that falls not down to worship them is an alien and an interloper! What hast *thou* to do with Paris?" In truth, my Love, I have

very little to do with it; yet here I am, and little less surprised than you are at my journey hither. The case, however, is not very marvellous after all. You must know, the daily sight of the French coast from Dover, had awakened the travelling propensities of certain of our party; particularly of the little fidgety, higgie-haggling, good-hearted, logic-chopping Mr. Strachey, and of the fair Princess whose name I must *not* mention; between whom after infinite consultations a trip to Vanity-fair was at length arranged; I by dint of multiplied solicitations and persuasions being as it were half-forced to accompany them. Through delays and entanglements, thro' perils by land and perils by water, we accordingly proceeded on our way; Strachey and I riding on the dickey of the Princess' carriage, herself and maid within; Strachey scolding the postillions and innkeepers in French that would have made even Rhadamanthus laugh, the rest of us taking the matter with extreme equanimity and all enjoying such raree-shew delights as an excursion of that kind affords. We arrived last Saturday; and continue I suppose till some days after next. The confusion, the tumult, the hubbub of our situation words would give a poor idea of: since the building of the Tower of Babel, I do not think it has been equalled. But your thirtieth of October is arriving; and I would not let it pass without assuring you that here or yonder I am still thinking of you with the feelings that become us both; that my spirit flies joyfully away from this jingling chaos of frivolity to join in communion however interrupted with the spirit that is dear to it beyond all others. Is not this the chief and most precious purport of all our Letters? That

we love one another, and *will* love one another thro' all the changes and chances of our existence in time or after it? Blessed truth! Glorious certainty! The words or ideas by which it is conveyed are of small importance, when such a meaning is attached to them.

In the middle of such an uproar you are not to expect that I should tell you anything worth telling of myself or the scene that is still so strange to me. Our journey, as you have seen, was planned upon a very humble principle, the hope of *seeing* with the bodily eye alone; and on this small scale I think it succeeds as well as could be expected. France has been so betravelled and beridden and betrodden by all manner of vulgar people that any romance connected with it is entirely gone off ten years ago; the idea of *studying* it is for me at present altogether out of the question; so I quietly surrender myself to the direction of guide books and *laquais de place*, and stroll about from sight to sight, as if I were assisting at a huge Bartholomew fair, only that the booths are the Palais Royal or the Boulevards, and the Shews the Theatre Français instead of Punch, and the Jardin des Plantes instead of the Irish giant or Polito's menagerie. For a few days such a life is tolerable enough; in a month, I think it could not fail to kill me with utter tedium. Of my adventures and impressions I will talk to you for many days when we meet; nay, you and I, you know, are to go and see all these curiosities in company: but for the present I must occupy my sheet with other matters. Suffice it to observe that I am moderately patient of the business, far more so than I anticipated; in rather better health than when I set out; and daily growing more and more contemptuous of

Paris, and the *manière d'être* of its people. Poor fellows! I feel alternately titillated into laughter and shocked to the verge of horror at the hand they make of Life. . . . Their houses are not houses, but places where they sleep and dress; they live in *cafés* and promenades and theatres; and ten thousand dice are set a-rattling every night in every quarter of their city. Every thing seems gilding and fillagree, addressed to the eye not to the touch. Their shops and houses are like toy-boxes; every apartment is tricked out with mirrors and expanded into infinitude by their illusion. This parlour is about twenty feet square; but glass and tinfoil spread it out into galleries like that of the Louvre; and not one but twenty score of men are writing to you. . . . Yesterday I walked along the *Pont Neuf*; jugglers and quacks and cooks and barbers and dandies and gulls and sharpers were racketing away with a deafening hum at their manifold pursuits; I turned aside into a small mansion with the name of *Morgue* upon it; there lay the naked body of an old grey-headed artisan whom misery had driven to drown himself in the river! His face wore the grim fixed scowl of despair; his lean horny hands with their long ragged nails were lying by his sides; his patched and soiled apparel with his apron and *sabots* were hanging at his head; and there fixed in his iron slumber, heedless of the vain din that rolled around him on every side, was this poor outcast stretched in silence and darkness forever. I gazed upon the wretch for a quarter of an hour; I think I never felt more shocked in my life. To live in Paris for a fortnight is a treat; to live in it continually would be a martyrdom.

But no one at present threatens me with such a

consummation: so let us leave Paris and Parisians till a fitter opportunity; and betake ourselves to something nearer home. By an accident which I now consider as most fortunate, I missed my passage to Calais by a minute and a half's delay; and — got your Letter! Before proceeding to Boulogne next day, I wrote an answer; but it was so *very* wild that I durst not risk sending it, lest you should cut me forever and a day. So, you are *not* jealous then? Provoking creature! already should corruption like the worm have been feeding on your damask cheek; if indeed you had not preferred making your quietus at once with a bare bodkin, and leaving the Princess Mistress of the field! It is clear enough that you care next to nothing for me, or something of this sort would have followed so alarming an announcement as my last. Will nothing move that flinty heart of yours? I swear I will have amends of you, if any can be had on Earth. — Seriously, I do not think you have any reason to be very jealous. If you choose to alter in all the leading features of your character, I may cease to respect and try if I can cease to love you; but till then, the danger is not pressing. No, Jane! I have more skill in people than you think. I know you have some hundreds of faults; yet with the whole of them ten times told, thou art worth any twenty women in the world. Housewives and Vanitarians, Unnaturals and Naturals, Saints and Worldlings, or whatever else their species may be that have passed in review before me, have each their several merit and attraction; but a heart and a spirit like my own Jane's I have seen nowhere.¹ Is that heart mine, my own?

¹ It is plain that Carlyle's heart was not captivated by any of the fine ladies, rich and brilliant though some of them were, whom

Oh, what a paltry knave were I to mock its generous affection, and cast it from me as a worthless thing — like the base Judean to throw a pearl away richer than all his tribe !¹ No, *mein Kind*, we were set apart by Destiny for each other ; we have chosen one another ; we are one, and nothing shall part us. Together, we may fail to be happy ; separate, we can hardly fail to be miserable. Let us abide by one another, befall what may ! If we are wise, the world may yet be a place of blessedness for both.

This journey to Paris has scattered all my projects to the winds ; at least has interrupted not only their fulfilment, but even their planning. Something notable, however, I will do ; and that shortly. If this pitiful book were off my hands, my fortune and circumstances shall be remodelled, or I may as well give up the cause entirely. Is it not hard for both of us ? There *is* a genius in you, there is a genius in me ; yet I feel as if it would never, never see the light at all, far less attain expansion and maturity, so many and so grievous are the obstacles that war against it ! One, by far the most tremen-

he met with in his travels. His heart untravelled, fondly turned to his Jeannie, as Robert Burns' did to Mary Morison :

“ Yestreen when to the trembling string
The dance gaed thro' the lighted ha',
To thee my fancy took its wing,
I sat but neither heard nor saw:
Tho' this was fair and that was braw,
And yon the toast o' a' the town,
I sighed and said amang them a',
' Ye are na Mary Morison.' ”

¹ “ . . . of one whose hand,
Like the base Indian threw a pearl away
Richer than all his tribe.” — “ Othello,” Act v. sc. 2.

The reading “ Indian ” is preferred to “ Judean ” by most Shakespearian commentators. The Judean is not prone to throw pearls away ; the base or ignorant Indian may do so through inappreciation of their value.

dous in my own case, the want of health, I am resolved, irrevocably resolved to conquer, if the means of conquering it can be accessible to man. I *will not* sit any longer with this infernal nightmare paralyzing all my faculties of mind and heart; I will be free as other sons of Adam are, let the cost be what it may! It seems so easy too: a residence in the country, with quietness and regularity, and fit succession of bodily and mental labour could not fail to set me quit of this quintessence of all curses. Do you know what I am thinking of, actually meditating as a scheme of life? I am meditating to engage with some literary Tradesman for a full translation of all Schiller's Works, dramatic and philosophical; to retire with the necessary apparatus into Annandale or any other dale; and there alternately writing and riding, reading and gardening and conversing with kind Christian souls, and living according to the strictest letter of the Birmingham code, to let poor old Nature rally her forces and restore me to my pristine strength and serenity of heart and head, before attempting farther in the fight of life, which at present I wage with such tremendous odds. Now what do you think of this? Is it a wise plan or utterly foolish? Tell me, give me your advice; for the interest of one is that of both. What think you of it? Will you take a share in the concern, and become a philosophical recluse yourself? Will you? Would you? O Heavens! what a thing it might be, if it prospered! But I fancy you are laughing at me, wicked enemy that you are; and I have nothing for it but to hold my peace, and let you have your way. Write to me, however, largely and frankly: it were good for us to understand these matters more completely. What good is there in

seclusion and reserve between *us*? Write, my Dearest, to *me*! [Your Letters, remember, are *always* for my own eye alone; whether this that I now write will be "all for yourself" or not, is uncertain; so I must be careful and on my "good behaviour."] ¹

But here are Strachey and Kitty (precious names as you observe!) returning from the Louvre; and I must be about my business. You will have a Letter waiting for me at Liverpool Terrace, Dover? I shall be there in eight days, and shall be *dreadfully* disappointed if I do not hear from you. Will you write directly? Tell me all your occupations, projects, wishes! Despise the little imp of a Doctorkin; banish the inane Gael, or tolerate him if he will not banish; follow your purposes in spite of every difficulty. Trust in me to the end, as I trust in you! Fortune will shine out on us; we will *force* her to shine, and we shall both be happy. God keep you, my Dearest! Farewell and love me!

I am ever, ever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

Go on with your *Schiller* as rapidly as possible: I begin printing forthwith on my return. I have given some scenes of *Karlos* and the *Maid of Orleans*, &c.; but the book will be a very mean one, do for it what I can.—Excuse this worst of Letters—the pen is execrable, the time short, and the place the *Rue de la Paix*, in the centre of the Temple of Frivolity and Dissipation. Let me hear from you immediately. Your Letters are

¹ The sentence in brackets is written in colloquial German, a language which Miss Welsh could read, but her mother not. Carlyle was uncertain whether his Letter would reach Edinburgh before Mrs. Welsh had joined her daughter there.

among my chief delights in life: if it were not for you and them, I often think I should become a misanthrope in good earnest, and despair of my fortunes and of myself. Adieu, my Dearest! Here they are, and I must leave you.—

LETTER 106

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

23, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, PENTONVILLE,
LONDON. 15 November, 1824.

MY DEAREST,—What has happened that you do not write? Is it possible that that French Letter can have missed you? I am sure I carried it myself to the Rue Jean Jacques Rousseau, and transacted for it with the greasy pig of a clerk to the uttermost sou; trusting to no *Suisse*, or *concierge*, or *laquais de place*, that I might be sure of quieting your anxieties and in due time of having my own quieted. Alas! no Letter waited for me at Dover; nothing but one poor dole of insipidity from a “friend” in Edinburgh, and another of affected sentimentality from the “noble Mrs. Montagu” at London; not a line from Dumfriesshire, not a line from Jane! Has aught happened—to me or to you? I cannot say that I am absolutely miserable on this account; but a Letter from you would be particularly precious at this very time. I make no grain of doubt but you will send it, the moment this arrives: you are very good; and these Letters of ours are as it were the food of hope; among the most valuable blessings of life to both of us. Are they not? Then let us become better correspondents, kinder and more frequent, every day!

For myself I engage to improve mightily at no distant date. And much need I have ; for throughout the last four months, I can scarcely recollect of writing to you one page of good sense, or any tolerable picture even of my own perceptions of it. I have been so hurried to and fro, so tossed about in never-ceasing vicissitude of all kinds, that I have scarcely known my right hand from my left ; and for thinking, it has been impossible as flying. Strange destiny ! That one, master of his own movements, and to whom repose and regularity are the essence of existence, should have been so whirled from capital to capital, and land to land, as I have been of late ! At last, however, thank Heaven ! it is over : after all these wanderings, I am seated in this quiet airy Street, in my own trim and comfortable apartments, by a hearth of which I am sole lord and master ; at liberty to live according to the dictates of my own will, which I may guide in part by those of reason, if I happen to possess any reason. Tomorrow I commence a meditated plan of life and labour : I will study and write, and try if I can gather any touch of health and wisdom ; and to you I will send a thousand thoughts and warmest wishes daily, and long Letters every week ; Letters as from *your* friend, your brother, one who loves you more than fifty thousand brothers, and regards your love as the jewel of his life. What a thing for me to be your guardian and counsellor and *Herzensfreund*, selected from all others, honoured before all ! Shall I *never* be more worthy of the honour ? Oh ! that I were worthy of it ! I should be the best and happiest man beneath the sun. But patience ! patience ! Better times will come.

On reaching London, after my French excursion, I tarried but one night in the Orator's, and proceeded next morning to establish myself in Lodgings. Lodgings I selected as the most eligible; tho' the noble Mrs. Montagu and various other noble persons solicited the "pleasure of accommodating" my most sick person and contentious spirit. The people *have* a touch of kindness in them; and do what I will, they persist in reckoning me a kind of genius, and the glory of protecting and consoling an afflicted genius all the world knows and covets. Genius, forsooth! a most notable genius! It is very good in these people; but really their protection is a trouble to me. For their kind feelings, God knows I thank them from the bottom of my heart; but farther it is not suitable at present. Here in my own quarters, I am free as air, and except society, have all I want: I am lonely, but I mean also to be busy; and as old Quixote said, and as I have often said after him, "if it were but a crust of bread and a cup of water that Heaven has given thee, rejoice that thou hast none but Heaven to thank for it!" A man that is not standing on his own feet in regard to economical affairs, soon ceases to be a man at all. Poor Coleridge is like the hulk of a huge ship; his masts and sails and rudder have rotted quite away. — Once, while in Birmingham, I thought of boarding with the Orator, and actually proposed some scheme of the sort: I now heartily rejoice that we never came to terms. The presence of *Him* seems to have upset the Orator's household and his mind too: his "dear Isabella" is engaged in nursing it, let the house go how it will; and Irving's talk and thoughts return with a resistless bias to the same charming topic, start from

where they please. Visit him at any time, you find him dry-nursing his off-spring; speak to him, he directs your attention to the form of its nose, the manner of its waking and sleeping and feeding and digesting; he dandles it fondly and gracefully as a she-bear does her cub; he asks you twice a minute (if he dare ask) whether it *is* not a pretty boy; sometimes he attempts a hideous chaunt to it by way of lullaby. But what is best of all, he maintains that this is exercising generosity, and forgetting self! I advised him to send for Mr. Horsenail's babe, a bigger and a heavier one than his, and nurse it: but he refused to be *so* generous. Good Irving! I prize his friendship, and his conversation on any subject but *Him*, which is one which I have long since utterly cut: but for living with him, I am glad that his circumstances and mine forbade me to make trial of it.

Since I settled here, for the last three days, I have done nothing but meditate in solemn solitude on the state of my affairs. That I am one of the most pitiful and miserable of the sons of Adam is a fact with which I was long ago familiar: how to help the evil, to grow less pitiful and miserable is the question I am now debating. True I am sick, forever sick, and isolated from the world; and cannot for a thousand paltry hindrances get any part of my small fraction of a mind exerted or developed: but what of that? Life with all its difficulties, Mr. C., and this very sickness the crowning curse of all, is the problem given you to solve; the chaos out of which your understanding (if any) is to bring out order and happiness and beauty: you are now free, Mr. C., unfettered in your movements; help yourself; accomplish this solution; regulate this chaos;

or go down to the Devil, and break some hearts that are dearer to you than existence — whichever you prefer. — Such is the order of the day: I am summoning every particle of strength within me to fulfil it. I have got all my implements and necessities arranged, or in the way of being so; and tomorrow morning I begin to live by rule! I mean to work and walk, and visit and rest, at stated hours; already I have returned to the rigorous practice of the Badams system; I have thrown away my French cigars and all similar enjoyments, and taken to subsist on the *third-part* of an ordinary ration of food per day. The first sheet of *Schiller*, I expect tomorrow: I will work at it and other things, in spite of the Fiend and all his emissaries. In these six or eight weeks too, I may begin to understand something of London and its resources; if my beggarly health be improved, I may continue; if not, there is Scotland, and gardening, and riding, and kindness that will never fail me, never tho' all else should fail. Next Letter I hope to tell you that my plan prospers, and that I am making progress tho' it were an inch per day. Occupation, the strenuous exertion of our faculties in fulfilling the purposes of our conscience and will, I hold to be the only panacea for the sufferings of a mortal. I know it, and have long known it; strange that I should practise it so little!

Now, my dearest and best Jane, are you heartily sick of me and my plans, and most long-winded expositions and details? No, you are not: for we are friends, friends forever, one in affection, one in interests. I wish much that we knew each other's wants and difficulties more minutely. Will you send me a detail as long and candid? O that I were near

you, that I saw you every day and hour! A thousand thoughts of you flit across my soul, and die unuttered; and when I write, nothing will go down on paper, that I most wish conveyed to you. Can you interpret for me? Have you too a heart that feels like mine? Are you kind to me? Do you believe that with all my follies from within, and mean obstructions from without, I wish to be an honest man, and love you as I love my life? Then be still good to me, and we will never part in this world or the next! "Fool! what puts parting in thy head?" I know not, unless it be that I *am* a fool. Last night I was searching and sorting the contents of my desk, unopened since I left Scotland; there lay a little heart cut in paper, and another half-cut within it, in the manner of your keep-lessons; on the inner one too stood the word "Homeless," written in what I thought your hand! Has this little paper-heart been yours, and how in Heaven's name came it hither? Ten dirges are not equal to expressing the *wae* affection, the *Wehmütige Sehnsucht* [sad longing] that I viewed it with: I could have cried if I had liked; but I did not; I merely laid it by in my safest recess, beside some other valuables, pronounced myself to be a very weak young man (as well I might), and went on with the task of burning dull Letters and all the trash of verses I could lay my hands on. Poor little heart! Do not laugh at me and it, you Gypsy! I swear it was exceedingly pathetic.

I designed to write at large about your coming hither; for the Orator has got a Letter, he says and you *are* to come! Heaven grant you were here in safety! I myself will escort you home. Tell me *all about it* when you write: I am to be your cice-

rone here? I have scarce visited one of the Lions, that we might enjoy the pleasures of wonder together. The Orator is partly a fool, so is his dear Isabella; yet both of them are kind and good, and he does love you with the sort of love whereof his nature is susceptible. You will be happy for a month! Come! Come! — But when will you write? Or why have you not written ere now? If it was mere idleness I will forgive you; but if it was *indifference* to me — to *me!* I will never forgive you, while I live. So look to it! —

Is the *Schiller* done or begun yet? It will be wanted in some weeks: I will take no excuse; if you cannot do that, do something else. How do you go on with your pupil? Tell me about Haddington, as far as it concerns yourself. What of the *Dugald creature*? What of the little Doctor? — Oh, do write in one moment! Be a good girl and do! My kindest respects to your Mother: I have a three-half-penny present for her from the *Palais Royal*, which will make her laugh to look at it. There is also a grey-complexioned Play-book¹ for *you*. — It is quite dark; and the Post-hour is arrived! Write, my Angel, write! I am yours forever and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 107

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, 23, Southampton-street,
Pentonville, London*

HADDINGTON, 18 November, '1824.'

MY DEAR, — What is all this about? I received your French Letter on the 6th or 7th; I answered

¹ A copy of "Molière."

it on the 10th,¹ which I think was as soon as a reasonable person would have expected; and before my Letter has time to be at Dover, you write again to ask "what has happened"! Was there ever such an impatient gentleman? However it must have been my Good Genius that put it in your head to write the last Letter: it arrived here so opportunely,—just five minutes after myself,—and helped to dissipate the sadness which I always feel when I return hither, and miss the welcome which once made home-coming delightful to me. How often do your Letters bring me comfort, Dearest! I wish there was a glass window in my heart, that you might look into it. You can never know by words how much I love you, and how gratefully I feel your kindness.

Well, here I am once more, full of new plans and resolutions. Heaven grant they may not end in smoke! I *will* be diligent this Winter,—will, if the Fates will only let me. But of this I am not at all clear. For the last six weeks, I have seldom been three days at a time without pain in my head; and now the gaieties of the Festival and the alarm of *the* Fire² have made me even worse than usual. The Newspapers will have informed you of this calamitous business; unfortunately I was at George-square, when it happened; and Mr. Bradfute being a party concerned, we were kept, while it lasted, in continual agitation. I verily believe another night of it would have killed me. The hubbub of Tuesday³ increased my headache to such a degree that I

¹ This Letter has been lost.

² The great fire in the Old Town of Edinburgh, on the 15th, 16th, and 17th days of November, 1824.

³ Perhaps the day in which Miss Welsh and her mother returned to Haddington.

was quite insensible for several hours. I am still in a very shattered condition; and not at all fit for writing or doing anything that requires the least effort of thought. However I expect that the air of home and a few nights of sound sleep will set me all to rights again. I would have waited till I was able to write at greater length, only that, in case my other Letter has not reached you, you might be fancying matters worse than they are.

Your present plan of life is quite to my mind: follow it out manfully, and all will be well. I commence *my* plan on Monday, if I am well by that time. I have done nothing yet, but bring order out of the chaos of Miss G——'s goods and chattels. I wish you had been at the opening of her enormous black trunk. There were books, clothes, drawings, shoes, artificial flowers, plumcakes, pastebeads and Lord knows what, all jumbled together in the most hopeless disorder. Unless she can be taught method, I do not know what will become of me. She goes to bed with my night-cap on, walks off in the morning with my combs in her hair, steals my needles and pins without conscience; in short she is fast taking possession of everything that belongs to me.

Tell me particularly what the Orator says about my coming. Try and get my other Letter, as I should not like to have it returned to me.

The Heart *was* mine; I remember writing the word upon it one night when I was very melancholy; but how it got into *your* desk I cannot divine.—What is the best Italian Dictionary?—Be satisfied with this “mean epistle, meanest of the letter kind.”¹—If I did not love you better than

¹ From the poetical letter. — See Appendix A, No. 11.

any body in the world, I would not have written tonight at all. — Do not be uneasy about my vexatious head: I know it will be well in a day or two. God bless you, my darling Friend. Think of me every hour till we meet; and believe me yours forever and ever. Amen!

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

Write soon, Dearest.

LETTER 108

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

23, SOUTHAMPTON STREET, PENTONVILLE,
LONDON, 4 December, 1824.

MY DEAREST, — I despatched a parcel of books and other ware for you the other day, directed to the care of Brother Jonathan: I expect you will receive it sometime early next week. It contains no Letter; only a hasty line, expressive of my earnest wish and persuasion that you would write to me directly on its arrival. . . .

Both your Letters are in my possession: kind creature that you are to write to me so pointedly and faithfully! I should have been in a woful pucker had you trusted to the Dover Postmaster; the friendly sheet would have lain two months in their Dead-letter Office here, and never reached *me* at all. But my anxieties were cleared away; you sent a little messenger of peace and affection out to greet me; it circulated thro' all the chaotic correspondence of this busy Island, and found me in my solitude at the anticipated hour, and cheered my heart with images of past and future happiness.

Even your sickness I have striven to make light of: I will not let myself believe that it is more than temporary; and the serious mood you partly owe to it, is that in which to me you are by far most interesting. Do not mock and laugh, however gracefully, when you can help it! But for your own sake, I had almost rather see you sad. It is the earnest, affectionate, warm-hearted, enthusiastic Jane that I *love*; the acute, sarcastic, clear-sighted, derisive Jane I can at best but *admire*. Is it not a pity you had such a turn that way? "Pity rather that the follies of the world, and yours among the number, Mr. Quack, should so often call for castigation!" Well, well! be it so then! A wilful man, and still more a wilful woman, must and will have her way. After all, you are a good girl, take you as we like; I have a small touch of love for you at the bottom of my heart in spite of everything. "*Voilà quelque chose* DEVILISH STRANGE!" as Strachey said: I scarcely think you can believe it. — Now let us turn over a new leaf in the paper, and still more in the subject!

I am meditating with as rigid an intensity as ever, on the great focus of all purposes at present, the arranging of my future life. Here is no light business, and no want of eagerness in me to see it done! As yet, I have made no way or very little; but already I am far happier than I was, from the mere consideration that my destiny, with all its manifold entanglements, perplexing and tormenting as they are, is now submitted to my own management. Freedom is the very life of man! Let difficulties oppress you as they please, do but satisfy your conscience that you are straining every nerve to remedy them, and the very search for peace, in

some degree is peace. Of my projects I can give no description; they fluctuate from day to day; and many of them are not of a kind to be explained in writing. Why will you not come directly, that I might talk with you for months, and persuade you and be persuaded? One item lies at the bottom of almost every scheme I form: it is a determination to have some household of my own; some abode which I may be lord of, tho' it were no better than the Cynic's tub; some abiding home, which I may keep myself in peace by the hope of improving, not of changing for another. I have lived too long in tents, a wandering Bedouin; the fruit of my toils wasted, or spent in the day that witnessed them: I feel the sad effects of that arrangement; every hour they are becoming sadder. The point, then, is to alter it, to find the means of altering it. O thou detested Fiend, Disease! most hideous of the progeny of Tophet! Could I but meet thee in some questionable shape, tho' it were frightful as the Hyrcanian Tiger, that I might grapple with thee, and kill thee, and scatter thy fragments to the four winds of heaven! but it is vain to imprecate: Ernulphus himself could make no impression here. I am sick, and must recover; and if so, in sickness itself provide the helps for getting out of it. Till then my mind lies spell-bound, the best of my talents (bless the mark!) shut up even from my own view, and the thought of writing anything beyond mere drudgery is vain. I see all this: but I will also see the plan of conquering it, if it can be conquered. I must settle myself down within reach of Edinburgh or London: I must divide my time between mental and bodily exercises; if the latter could be turned to profit,

could be regularly fixed and ordered by necessity of any kind, I should regard the point as gained. Had I land of my own, I should instantly be tempted to become a—Farmer! Laugh outright! But it is very true. I think how I should mount on horseback in the grey of the morning; and go forth like a destroying angel among my lazy hinds; quickening every sluggish hand; cultivating and clearing, tilling and planting, till the place became a very garden round me! In the intermediate hours, I could work at literature; thus *compelled* to live according to the wants of nature, in one twelvemonth, I should be the healthiest man in three parishes; and *then*—if I said or did nothing notable, it were my own blame, or nature's only. This, you say, is Utopian dreaming, not the sober scheme of a man in his senses. I am sorry for it; sorry that nothing half so likely to save me comes within the circuit of my capabilities: I must try to make the nearest possible approximation to it. A sinecure!¹ God bless thee! my Darling, I could not touch a sinecure tho' twenty of my friends (not one of whom has any shadow of a wish or power that way) should volunteer to offer it. *Keineswegs!* [By no means!] It is no part of my plan to eat the bread of idleness, so long as I have the force of a sparrow left in me to procure the honest bread of industry. Irving, too! Good Irving! His thoughts are friendly, but he expresses them like a goose. "Help me to the uttermost!" If he can help himself to get along "the path thro' life," it is all that I shall

¹ The mention of a sinecure and help from Irving to the uttermost is probably in reply to something which Miss Welsh had said in the lost Letter of 10th November.

ask of him. If his own shins are safe at the journey's end (a point on which there are many doubts), let him hang a votive tablet up, and go to bed in peace: I shall manage mine. There is no use in "helps"; the grown-up man that cannot be his own help ought to solicit his discharge from the church militant, and turn him to some milder region, by the very earliest conveyance. For affection or the faintest imitation of it, a man should feel obliged to his very dog; but for the gross assistance of patronage, or purse, let him pause before accepting them from any one; let him utterly refuse them except from beings that are enshrined in his heart of hearts, and from whom no chance *can* divide him. It is the law in Yarmouth that "every herring hang by its own head"; except in cases singularly wretched, or singularly happy, that judicious principle, I think, should also govern life.

But it is time to turn from these most selfish speculations, to you, whom I should not overburden, tho' I feel that I have *not* wearied you, with talking of them. When, when shall I see you? You cannot think what need I have, for a thousand reasons, to discourse with you at large and long. How many things are there which it is necessary for me to understand, how many counsels and explanations and exhortations to give and to receive! Could you not come forthwith? There is no end to this Cousin and his doubts. And what a thing would it be, if I were gone when you arrived! They are getting on with that printing business, at a snail's pace; but six or seven weeks will set them thro' it; and then I have nothing to detain me here. My future movements must be regulated by the face of circumstances: in my present situation, I have

no intention to continue. The Orator is gone for two weeks, or I would ask him about your weary visit, this very day. He is not misleading you about his house: like most London houses it is hampered and unsubstantial; you will find your accommodation far below what you have been accustomed to at home. Mrs. Irving is no bad person: kindness and affectation are her leading features; what a pudder there will be when you arrive! For the Winter, she has a Sister with her; rather less unbeautiful and more affected and about as kindly. Of neither will you make an intimate, or more than a frank but trivial, every-day companion; and it will be incumbent on you daily to take some little pains with *Him*. On the whole, I fear I am selfish in wishing you so much to come. As a Town London is not worth looking at for above a week; and I know scarcely one or two of Irving's friends whom you are likely to take pleasure in, or draw advantage from. There is no truly intellectual person in his list; scarcely indeed, in London. For my part, at least, I must say that I have fallen in with none: anything resembling a "great man," a man exercised with sublime thoughts and emotions, able even to participate in such, and throw any light on them, is a treasure I have yet to meet with. Nevertheless, it has much in it, this monster of a city, that will amuse you and awaken you to new thoughts; and with all its imperfections it is London, the London everyone delights to see or to have seen. I have held up the soberest view of it; and still, I think, I would have you risk it for a few weeks. It would be so delightful for *us both* to see it; and I would escort you home in person! The Orator's house is as ready now, as it will ever be;

and for your Cousin he is not to be counted on. Tell me what you think; and I will question the Orator the moment he returns. I think, either you should make up your mind to come soon, or for the present to renounce the project altogether. Perhaps it is only that I *wish* it so, and *believe* that I “think” it. Consider my temptations; and take them into the account. — But enough of this topic! Far too much of it, considering its real importance! Let us decide it, and be done with it. — Now will you write to me, write *all* that is in your heart? Would that there were a “glass-window” in that best of hearts, and that I (alone) could read what passed within it! How many things might then perhaps be clear and fixed, which now are dim and fluctuating! but the time is coming, the time that will decide. Shall I love you forever, or am I a fool for loving you at all? I *will* love you to the end of time, betide what may! Now, write, write, *meine Eigene*; write soon and largely, and tell me all, all! — The moment you get the parcel, if not before! — Adieu my Dearest! I am thine wholly and forever!

T. CARLYLE.

I am stirring in the matter of Schiller's Works; between a London and an Edinburgh Bookseller, I have little choice: if I can find one in either city to my mind, I will engage. If not, which is likely enough, I can take to something else. There are twenty things! — Have you begun *Hero and Leander*? Try it by all means!

I will send you some prose to translate and *be printed*, if you like: but not till your head is quite recovered. How *are* you? What a wretch I shall be, if I have been rocking myself in idle hopes and

you have all this while been sick ! Tell me ! Tell me ! And if you love me, be on your guard ! I will yet persuade myself that it is nothing !

LETTER 109

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, 23, Southampton-street,
Pentonville, London*

HADDINGTON, 19 December, '1824.'

BEST AND DEAREST, — I have been putting off writing, from day to day, that I might be able to tell you of the arrival of the parcel ; but as I am wearying already to hear from you again, and as you may possibly be feeling anxious about *me* in the meantime, I will not put off an hour or minute longer. What can have befallen this precious parcel ? I begin to dread it is gone to the bottom of the sea, or somewhere equally beyond my reach. It is really exceedingly tantalizing ; the more so as I had persuaded myself you would have the consideration to send some of your verses in it, which I am dying with impatience to see. The Books I can more easily make up my mind to lose : the greatest pleasure which these could afford me, the pleasure of one more proof of your mindfulness and affection, I have already enjoyed in knowing that you sent them. However, it *may* cast up. Perhaps "The Queen of Love doth watch its way, doth pity me, and will it safe convey here to my bosom."¹

¹ Irving's "Sonnet" from which this quotation is taken begins as follows :

"Thou raven lock ! on which mine eyes do rest
Unwearied. Thou dear emblem of my Jane
Whose hand did crop thee from her head, fit test
Of her affection ever to remain."

— and so on, to the usual fourteen lines.

Did you ever see Edward Irving's Sonnet "To a Lock of my Lady's Hair which reached me thro' hairbreadth 'scapes?" It is quite Petrarchan and, what is odd, there is not one word of Isabella in it from beginning to end.

So you would have me either come to London forthwith or give up the darling project altogether. Why give it up pray? seeing it does harm to nobody, and serves to enliven the dulness of my life in the meanwhile? "Why? because I shall possibly be gone when it suits your convenience to come, and in that case I would rather you should stay where you are." *Eh bien!* I really cannot go South this week, — not even to accommodate you, Dear, — nor any week before the month of February; for two reasons: First because I have no fancy for a journey in the dead of Winter; and Secondly, because I shall not be quit of my Pupil any sooner.¹ However it is by no means my intention to renounce the project; tho' you have done your endeavour to strip it of all poetry, it is still sufficiently attractive to me. There is no intellectual person, you say, on the Orator's list! Why, what has befallen his acquaintance? Where are all the eminent personages, the very salt of the Earth, whom you and he told me of? The Johanna Baillie who makes plays and puddings with the same facility and shines alike as a Genius and a sick-nurse; the Mrs. Montagu who combines the majestic virtues of a Roman matron with the meek graces of a Christian lady of the nineteenth century; "who *might have been* the Mother of the Gracchi," and "*is* the

¹ Irving had, in a Letter of 10th May, 1824, given Miss Welsh good and solid reasons for postponing his invitation of her till the "Spring" of 1825. — See Appendix B, Note Three.

Mother of all excellence";¹ the Mrs. Montagu, in short, who taught Edward Irving "to rest"? *Your* "Rosy-fingered Morn," too, the Hindoo Princess, where is she? And Mrs. Strachey, the only woman to whom I ever heard you give praise without some mixture of sarcasm; and Barry Cornwall; and the "single-minded Wilkie"; and Coleridge, "the first of Talkers"; and your "dear Allan Cunningham" who speaks Annandale in such perfection; — all the people, in short, who were to "show me the road to excellence," and to help me to that "spiritual blessedness which my heart hath not yet found"? Do they yet live? and if they do, how dare you hold them so cheap? Discontented mortal that you are! If like me you had lived all your days in a little provincial Town, you would know better how to appreciate such good company. Oh no! it is not the fear of being disappointed in the people, and still less is it the vulgar fear of being ill-accommodated, which disinclines me to the London visit. It is the little dependence which I place on the Orator's and his Wife's feelings towards me. I have ceased to feel offended with his Reverence; but still I cannot forget that he has given me cause of offence; and past experience makes me hesitate about placing my happiness again in his power. Besides I strongly suspect that this invitation proceeds not so much from any present wish, as from the necessity of fulfilling a long engagement. For his Wife, unless she is a very different woman from what I take her to be, she will hardly forgive me for the good I have done her: the recovery of a faithless lover, I should think, is a benefit for which one woman is not likely to be very grateful to an-

¹ These quotations are from Irving's Letters to Miss Welsh.

other.¹ — But in the name of verbosity, what is it to you and me whether Isabella Martin loves or hates me; or whether Isabella's Husband is disposed to help me to the uttermost or to leave me to assist myself? Thank Heaven I have "a heart for either fate."² I shall see from the Orator's manner of renewing his invitation, if he wishes me to come or not, and I will go or stay accordingly. Do you say nothing more to him about the matter, and unsay anything which in the imprudence of your heart you may have said.

Whichever way it is settled, I daresay I shall outlive another season. To be sure, I have no society here, at least none that deserves the name; but I have long been learning to do without; and, for the rest, my situation at present is far from desperate. I am at home, my own "sweet home"; my head is as well as it is likely to be in this world; and I am setting all my strength to fulfil the *dictates of my will and conscience*. The greatest drawback to my comfort at present is Miss G. Teaching, I find, is not the most amusing thing on earth; in fact, with a stupid lump for a Pupil, it is about the most irksome. I cannot think yet what tempted my Mother to involve me in such a task, or me to suffer myself to be involved in it. When the thing was proposed to me, my intellect (I believe) was bewildered by the Highlander's tumbling feats; and that is my only excuse. Can you imagine a more preposter-

¹ See Appendix B, Note Three.

² "Here 's a sigh to those who love me,
And a smile to those who hate;
And whatever sky's above me,
Here 's a heart for every fate."

BYRON, "To Thomas Moore."

ous arrangement? What have we to do with Miss Catherine G., or Dugald G., or any of the G. family? Six months ago we did not know of their existence. Would to Heaven, it had remained an everlasting secret! Neither are they particularly destitute, or particularly meritorious that we should take any such lively interest in them. Yet here am I day after day spending time and temper upon this Dunderhead of a girl, labouring to reform her Boarding-school manners, and to enlighten the Cimmerian darkness of her understanding! And the best of it is, she seems to think all the while, she is doing me a favour by enduring my instructions and advice. Nevertheless, I think I should not grudge my pains, if I saw they were likely to be attended with any success; but *absque ingenio labor inutilis* [without genius labour is vain] and my pupil has no genius for anything beyond flowering muslin. I may explain and repeat and lecture and scold as long as I have lungs left, but it is all to no purpose. Her mind is like the pitchers of the Danaïdes, it lets out faster than I can put anything into it! However with all its drawbacks, this Governessship of mine has *some* advantages. In the first place, it makes it impossible for me to study to excess, which I am somewhat apt to do when I study at all; and overstraining you have told me, and I really believe it, is the reason that I so often relax. My Pupil's music and drawing and French and Italian lessons fill up so large a portion of my time that I have only four hours a-day at my own disposal. Secondly, it affords me a pretext for living by rule. I can now without fear of disobliging my Mother, follow out a plan of regular occupation in defiance of callers and all such impertinent interrup-

tions : she cannot with a good grace take offence at my regularity, seeing that it is essential to a faithful discharge of the office she herself has imposed upon me. And lastly, it helps to keep me in good-humour with myself: my abilities, mean as they are, are so greatly above Miss G.'s, that when I compare myself with her, which I have perpetual occasion to do, I cannot help entertaining a sort of self-satisfaction which in some degree counterbalances the humiliation I feel on comparing myself with you, or anybody of real genius.

Now will you still dare to maintain that I am not a philosopher? I question if you yourself, Mr. Socrates, could have found as much matter of consolation in so trying a predicament! There is one thing that I am heartily glad at : contrary to my expectations I have had no further molestation from the Dugald Creature ; except that he is ever and anon sending me books which I never read, and Letters which I never answer. I fancy my behaviour at our meeting in Edinburgh, did not hold out much encouragement to him to try a visit ; yet I believe all the contemptuousness of manner I am mistress of, could hardly have daunted his modest assurance, if my Mother had only given him an invitation. But luckily for me, the G——s are already ex-favourites. The amiable Dugald has grown somewhat overfat during his sojourn in the North. *That* I believe is his crime ; at least his *embonpoint* is the only change I see in him. And as for the amiable Catherine, on better acquaintance she is found to be not amiable at all. She is good-humoured, indeed imperturbably good-humoured, but that is the sum total of her virtues ; for the rest, she is mean, cunning, disgusting, greedy, ungrateful, insensible,

stupid, and (what is most intolerable of all) she is downright rude to Shandy ; in short, she no longer finds favour in my Mother's sight. — But what is tempting me to cram my paper with such very uninteresting matters, uninteresting at least to you? Fortunately you are very good to me and will not yawn *much* at anything that touches my comfort. — What a stupid illegible monstrously long epistle! and all about myself! Not a word of you or your project of turning Farmer, of which I intended to have written almost exclusively. — “If you had land of your own you would improve it”! Suppose you improve mine?¹ It is to let at present, and I know none that has more need of improvement. Well, may God prosper you in all your undertakings whatever they are! Write largely to me in the meantime, and be quick about it, for I am longing as much to hear from you again as if I had not seen your handwriting for six months. — I never sent you a crossed Letter before, I believe. Be patient with this one, and I will promise never to send you another. God bless you dearest of Friends and never let you forget me.

Yours *auf ewig*,

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

LETTER 110

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

PENTONVILLE, 20 December, 1824.

MY DEAREST, — These booksellers are certainly a consequence of the Fall of Adam; they were sent

¹ Craigenputtock.

into the world for our sins. I expected ere this to have been cherishing myself with your answer to my Letter; you are unpleasantly awaiting the arrival of the promised parcel; and I must keep my patience for another week and a half. Rascally, drivelling, two-footed things that they are! Three weeks ago I hurried off the packet in the greatest haste; Jack writes that it has not come; I go to ask about it; and find it — quietly reposing on its shelf in Fleet-street! They were sorry; they had not understood; they were *very* sorry. — So I brought it home with me, and here it lies expecting some more trustworthy conveyance. By good luck I have got a Council-office frank; and I hope this Letter will reach you on Friday-night. The rest will follow in due season; there was nothing but a sorry copy of Molière's Plays, which I got for you in Paris; they may come as slowly as they like. But do not, I pray you, delay to write, the moment you get this, if you have not already written: I am immeasurably anxious to hear from you. A whole month has passed without a word.

In the aspect of my own affairs there is scarcely any change since I wrote last. The printing of *Schiller* proceeds with somewhat less tardiness than I dreaded: today I got the seventh sheet; so that almost a third part of the work is already off my hands. It is going to make a handsome enough Book; rather larger than a volume of *Meister*, and somewhat in the same style. A certain Mr. *Bull*, one of Irving's *geniuses*, is engraving a portrait for it. I long to have the pitiful affair put past me, that I may be able to quit the tumults of the *Wen* (so Cobbett calls it), and establish myself somewhere more to my wishes and wants. My future move-

ments are still as undecided as ever ; only here I ought *not* to be, longer than I cannot help it. If there be sleep and quiet and free air to be had on Earth, I will have them ; if there are not, I will reconcile myself the best way I can to do without them ; but not till I have found that there are not. The Translation of Schiller has made no advances towards being realized : indeed the first Letter I had written on the subject, I find still lying among these unhappy books, and only send it off with this. Patience ! Patience ! A little time will settle all. If I can get no suitable arrangement made for this, I will abandon it, and take to something better. The very sparrow earns for itself a livelihood, beneath the eaves of the cottage : if I the illustrious Mr. Thomas Carlyle cannot, then let me be sent to the Australian Continent directly. Faint-hearted mortal ! These scribblers round thee are a mere *canaille* : struggle thro' ten thousand of them, or go to pot — as thou deservest.

Irving advises me to stay in London ; partly with a friendly feeling, partly with a half-selfish one, for he would fain keep me near him. Among all his followers there is none whose intercourse can satisfy him ; any other than him it would go far to disgust. Great part of them are blockheads, a few are fools ; there is no rightly intellectual man among them. Then he speculates and speculates, and would rather have me contradict him rationally, at least now and then he would, than gape at him with the vacant stare of children viewing “the Grand Turk’s Palace with his Guards — all alive.” He advises me, not knowing what he says. He himself has the nerves of a buffalo ; and forgets that I have not. His philosophy with me is like a gill of ditch-water

thrown into the crater of Mount Ætna; a million gallons of it would avail me nothing. I receive his nostrums with a smile: he at length despairs of ever seeing me converted.

On the whole, however, he is among the best fellows in London; by far the best that I have met with. Thomas Campbell has a far clearer judgment, infinitely more taste and refinement; but there is no living well of thought or feeling in him; his head is a shop not a manufactory; and for his heart, it is dry as a Greenock *kipper*. I saw him for the second time, the other night; I viewed him more clearly and in a kindlier light, but scarcely altered my opinion of him. He is not so much a man, as the Editor of a Magazine: his life is that of an exotic; he exists in London, as most Scotchmen do, like a shrub disrooted, and stuck into a bottle of water. Poor Campbell! There were good things in him too: but Fate has pressed too heavy on him, or he has resisted it too weakly. His poetic vein is failing or run out; he has a Port-Glasgow Wife, and their only son is in a state of idiocy. I sympathized with him; I could have loved him, but he has forgot the way to love. — Little Procter here has set up house on the strength of his writing faculties, with his Wife, a Daughter of the “Noble Lady.” He is a good-natured man, lively and ingenious; but essentially a small. — Coleridge is sunk inextricably in the depths of putrescent indolence. Southey and Wordsworth have retired far from the din of this monstrous City. So has Thomas Moore. Whom have we left? . . .¹

Such is the “Literary World” of London; indis-

¹ A passage giving a highly unfavourable opinion of certain London literary men is here omitted.

putably the poorest part of its population at present. Among the other classes of the people, I have met with several whom I like considerably, and whose company still continues to afford me pleasure. The Montagus I see perhaps once a-week : the husband is a wiseacre, with an obliging heart ; the lady has the most cultivated taste (in pictures, and players, and attitudes and forms) of any person I remember ; in her own sphere of observation, she is quick-sighted as a lynx ; she delights to be among geniuses and lions, and *has* a touch of kindness for one in her heart, tho' she shows it very much as if it were *all* counterfeit. You may draw on her for any quantity of *flattery* you like, and of any degree of fineness. Irving she treats with it by the hogshead ; me by the dram-glass, in a stolen way, having almost turned my stomach with excessive doses of it at first. If there is an eccentric virtuoso, a crack-brained philosopher in London, you will hear of him at that house ; a man of true sense is a *specie* whom I have scarcely ever met with there. Yet they are kind and good, and as the world goes very superior people : I talk with them in a careless, far-off, superficial way, for an hour or two with great ease and enjoyment of its kind. The Stracheys are a better tho' less speculative family : I *wish* the lady had been possessed of any philosophy or true culture, I should have admired and loved her much, for she is in truth a noble-minded woman. . . .

But I must not kill you with my talk. One little piece of news ; and thou shalt have a respite. The other twilight, the lackey of one Lord Bentinck came with a lackey's knock to the door, and delivered me a little blue parcel, requiring for it a receipt under my hand. I opened it somewhat

eagerly, and found two small pamphlets with ornamental covers, and — a Letter from — Goethe!¹ Conceive my satisfaction: it was almost like a message from Fairy Land; I could scarcely think that *this was* the real hand and signature of that mysterious personage, whose name had floated thro' my fancy, like a sort of spell, since boyhood; whose thoughts had come to me in maturer years with almost the impressiveness of revelations. But what says the Letter? Kind nothings, in a simple patriarchal style, extremely to my taste. I will copy it, for it is in a character that you cannot read; and send it to you with the original, which you are to keep as the most precious of your literary relics. Only the last line and the signature are in Goethe's hand: I understand he *constantly* employs an amanuensis. Do you transcribe my copy, and your own translation of it, into the blank leaf of that German paper, before you lay it by; that the same sheet may contain some traces of him whom I most venerate and her whom I most love in this strangest of all possible worlds.

Now, *Liebchen*, having heard all this from me so patiently, will you tell me when I am to see your own sweet face? Will you come to London and view the wonders of it before I leave it? Or shall I find you at Haddington, and we visit this monster of a place at some future day? Why have I not the *wishing carpet*, that I might transport myself to your quiet parlour this very moment! It is of the last importance for me at present to

¹ This Letter, dated 30th Oct., 1824, together with the rest of the Goethe-Carlyle correspondence, was published by Messrs. Macmillan & Co. in 1887, under the able editorship of the late Professor C. E. Norton.

know your purposes; my resolutions must to no small extent be regulated by yours: let this among other things excuse the egotism of my late Letters. I desire earnestly that you should know me as I feel and am; I desire no less so to know you. Write at least, without reserve! Let us understand each other, if possible: I believe it concerns the happiness of both that we do. My purpose is to make *no* further changes in my situation, after the next entire one, if I can by any means avoid them. I would labour for the sum-total of the future, tho' I commenced at nothing, no longer for the day or the year that was passing over me. Am I right or wrong? Will you approve of it and second it? Or will you merely sanction it with contemptuous toleration? Tell me: by the love we bear each other, by your faith in the honesty of my intentions, tell me sincerely! The wish that is dearest to me you know as well as I. Think of this; advise me, decide for me.

I have a million of minor questions, but no room or spirit to ask them at present. God grant that you may be well, as I have all along been trying to convince myself you were! Write me in a day, an hour, if you love me. Good night, my Dearest! *Ich küsse dich zehntausendmal* [I kiss thee ten thousand times]. God bless thee, my little girl! I am ever and wholly thine,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER III

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

PENTONVILLE, 9th January, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — I trust that the same cheerful spirit of affection which breathes in every line of your last charming Letter, still animates you, and disposes you kindly towards me. I have somewhat to propose to you; which it may require all your love of me to make you look upon with favour. If you are not the best woman in this world, it may prove a sorry business for both of us.

You bid me tell you how I have decided; what I mean to do. My Dearest! it is you that must decide: I will endeavour to explain to you what I wish; it must rest with you to say whether it can ever be attained. You tell me, “*You* have land which needs improvement; why not work on that?” In one word then: Will you go with me, will you be my own forever; and I embrace the project with my whole heart? Say, Yes! And I send my Brother Alick over to rent that Nithsdale Farm¹ for me without delay; I proceed to it, the moment I am freed from my engagements here; I labour in arranging it, and fitting everything for your reception; and the instant it is ready, I take you home to my hearth, and my bosom, never more to part from me whatever fate betide us!

I fear you think this scheme a baseless vision: and yet it is the sober best among the many I have meditated; the best for me, and I think also as far as I can judge of it, for yourself. If it take effect

¹ Craigenputtock.

and be well conducted, I look upon the recovery of my health and equanimity, and with these, of regular profitable and natural habits of activity, as things which are no longer doubtful. I have lost them by departing from Nature. I must find them by returning to her. A stern experience has taught me this; and I am a fool if I do not profit by the lesson. Depend on it, Jane, this literature, which both of us are so bent on pursuing, will *not* constitute the sole nourishment of any true human spirit. No truth has been forced upon me, after more resistance, or with more invincible impressiveness, than this. I feel it in myself, I see it daily in others. Literature is the *wine* of life; it will not, cannot be its *food*. What is it that makes Blue-stockings of women, Magazine-hacks of men? They neglect household and social duties, they have no household and social enjoyments. Life is no longer with them a verdant field, but a *hortus siccus* [parched garden]; they exist pent up in noisome streets, amid feverish excitements; they despise or overlook the common blessedness which Providence has laid out for *all* his creatures, and try to substitute for it a distilled quintessence prepared in the alembic of Painters and Rhymers and sweet Singers. What is the result? This *ardent spirit* parches up their nature; they become discontented and despicable, or wretched and dangerous. Byron and all strong souls go the latter way; Campbell and all weak souls the former. "*Hinaus!*" as the Devil says to Faust, "*Hinaus ins frey Feld!*" [Out into the free field!]. There is no soul in these vapid "articles" of yours: away! Be men, before attempting to be *writers*!

You, too, my Darling, are unhappy; and I see the reason. You have a deep, earnest, vehement spirit,

and no earnest task has ever been assigned it. You despise and ridicule the meanness of the things about you: to the things you honour you can only pay a fervent adoration, which issues in no practical effect. O that I saw you the mistress of a house; diffusing over human souls that loved you those clear faculties of order, judgement, elegance, which you are now reduced to spend on pictures and portfolios; blessing living hearts with that enthusiastic love which you must now direct to the distant and dimly seen! All this is in you, Jane! You have a heart and an intellect and a resolute decision, which might make you the model of wives, however widely your thoughts and your experience have hitherto wandered from that highest destination of even the noblest woman. I too, have wandered wide and far! Let us return, my Dearest! Let us return *together*! Let us learn thro' one another what it is to live; let us become citizens of this world; let us set our minds and habitudes in order, and grow under the peaceful sunshine of Nature, that whatever fruit or flowers have been implanted in our spirits may ripen wholesomely and be distributed in due season! What is genius but the last perfection of true manhood? The pure reflexion of a spirit in union with itself, discharging all common duties with more than common excellence, extracting from the many-coloured scenes of life in which it mingles, the beautifying principle which more or less pervades them all? The rose in its full-blown fragrance is the glory of the fields: but there must be a soil and stem and leaves, or there will be no rose. Your mind and my own *have* in them many capabilities; but the first of all their duties is to provide for their own regulation and

contentment : if there *be* an overplus to consecrate to higher ends, it will not fail to show itself; if there be none, it is better that it never should attempt to show itself.

But I must leave these generalities, and avoid romance; for it is an earnest practical affair we are engaged in, and requires sense and calculation, not poetics and enthusiasm. "Where then," you ask me, "are the *means* of realizing these results, of mastering the difficulties and deficiencies that beset us both?" This too I have considered; the black catalogue of impediments has passed again and again in review before me; but on the whole I do not think them insurmountable. If you will undertake to be my faithful helper, as I will all my life be yours, I fear not to engage with them! The first, the lowest, but a most essential point, is that of funds. On this matter, I have still little to tell you that you do not know. I feel in general that I have ordinary faculties in me, and an ordinary diligence in using them; and that thousands manage life in comfort with even slenderer resources. In my present state my income tho' small might to reasonable wishes be sufficient; were my health and faculties restored, it *might* become abundant. Shall I confess to you, my Dearest, this is a difficulty, which I imagine we are apt to overrate. The essentials of even elegant comfort are not difficult to procure: it is only vanity that is insatiable in consuming. To my taste, cleanliness and order are far beyond gilding and grandeur, which without them are an abomination: and for displays, for festivals and "parties," I believe you are as indisposed as myself. Your Mother's house is truly the *best* I have ever seen; tho' in my travels I have looked at some where

thirty times the money was expended. After all, what is the use of this same vanity? Where is the good of being its slaves? If thou and I love one another, if we discharge our duties faithfully and steadfastly, one labouring with honest manful zeal to provide, the other with noble wifelike prudence in dispensing, have we not done all *we can*; are we not acquitted at the bar of our own conscience? And what is it to us, whether this or that Squire or Bailie be richer or poorer than we?

Two laws I have laid down to myself: That I must and will recover health, without which to think or even to live is burdensome or unprofitable; and that I will *not* degenerate into the wretched thing which calls itself an Author in our Capitals, and scribbles for the sake of filthy lucre in the periodicals of the day. Thank Heaven! there are other means of living: if there were not, I for one should beg to be excused! My projects I will give you in detail *when we meet*. That Translation of *Schiller* I think will *not* take effect; that of the *Lives* has brightened up in me again, and I think *will*. Perhaps it is better for me: I ought to thank the timorousness of Booksellers for driving me back on it. Failing both, there are other schemes, schemes unconnected with writing altogether. But here is not an inch of space for speaking of them.

On the whole I begin to entertain a certain degree of contempt for the Destiny, which has so long persecuted me. I will be a man in spite of it! Yet it lies with you, my Dearest, whether I shall be a *right* man, or only a hard bitter Stoic. What say you, Jane? Decide for yourself and me! Consent, if you dare trust me! Consent, and come to my

faithful breast, and let us live and die together! Yet fear not to deny me, if your judgement so determine. It will be a sharp pang that tears away from me forever the hope, which now for years has been the solace of my existence: but better to endure it and all its consequences, than to witness and to cause the forfeit of your happiness. At times, I confess, when I hear you speak of your gay Cousins, and contrast with their brilliant equipments my own simple exterior, and scanty prospects, and humble but to me most dear and honourable-minded kinsmen, whom I were the veriest dog if I ever ceased to love and venerate and cherish for their true affection, and the rugged sterling [worth] of their characters; when I think of all this, I could almost counsel you to cast me utterly away, and connect yourself with one whose friends and station were more analogous to your own. But anon in some moment of self-love, I say proudly, There is a spirit in *me*, which is worthy of this noble maiden, which shall be worthy of her! I will take her to my heart, care-laden but ever true to her; I will teach her, I will guide her, I will make her happy! Together we will share the joys and sorrows of existence; I will bear her in my arms thro' all its vicissitudes, and Fate itself shall not divide us.

Speak, then, my Angel! How say you? Will you be mine, mine? Or am I a fool for having hoped it? Think well; of me, of yourself, of our circumstances; and determine. Or have you not already thought? You love me do you not? Dare you trust me; dare you trust your fate with me, as I trust mine with you? Say Yes! and I see you in February, and take "sweet coun-

sel”¹ with you about all our hopes and plans and future life, thenceforward to be one and indivisible. Say No! and — But you will not say no, if you can help it; for you *do* love me, deny it as you will; and your spirit longs to be mingled with mine, as mine with yours, that we may be *one* in the sight of God and man forever and ever!

Now judge if I wait your answer with impatience! I know you will not keep me waiting. — Of course it will be necessary to explain all things to your Mother, and take her serious advice respecting them. For your other “friends” it is not worth consulting one of them. I know not that there is one among them that would give you as disinterested an advice as even I, judging in my own cause. May God bless you, and direct you, my Dearest! Decide as you will, I am yours forever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 112

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, 23, Southampton Street,
Pentonville, London*

HADDINGTON, 13 January, ‘1825.’

MY DEAREST FRIEND,—I little thought that my joke about your farming Craigenputtock was to be made the basis of such a serious and extraordinary project. If you had foreseen the state of perplexity which your Letter has thrown me into, you would have practised *any* self-denial (I am sure) rather than have written it. But there is no use in talking of what is *done* — “*Cosa fatta ha*

¹ “We took sweet counsel together.” — Psalm lv. 14.

capo!" [The thing done has an end!] The thing to be considered now is what to *do*.

You have sometimes asked me, did I ever think. For once in my life at least, I have thought myself into a vertigo, and without coming to any positive conclusion. However, my mind (such as it is) on the matter you have thus precipitately forced on my consideration, I will explain to you frankly and explicitly as the happiness of us both requires.

I love you, I have told you so a hundred times;¹ and I should be the most ungrateful and injudicious of mortals if I did not; but I am not *in love* with you; that is to say, my love for you is not a passion which overclouds my judgement, and absorbs all my regard for myself and others. It is a simple, honest, serene affection made up of admiration and sympathy and better perhaps, to found domestic enjoyment on than any other. In short, it is a love which *influences*, does not *make* the destiny of a life.

Such temperate sentiments lend no false colouring, no "*rosy light*" to your project. I see it such as it is, with all the arguments for and against it; I see that my consent under existing circumstances would indeed secure to *me* the only fellowship and support I have found in the world; and perhaps, too, shed some sunshine of joy on *your* existence which has hitherto been sullen and cheerless; but, on the other hand, that it would involve you and myself in numberless cares and difficulties; and expose *me* to petty tribulations, which I want fortitude to despise, and which, not despised, would imbitter the peace of us both.

¹ "I have told you so a hundred times" is suppressed by Mr. Froude.

I do not wish for fortune more than is sufficient for my wants ; my natural wants, and the artificial ones which habit has rendered nearly as importunate as the other ; but I will not marry on less, because in that case every inconvenience I was subjected to, would remind me of what I had quitted ; and the idea of a sacrifice should have no place in a voluntary union. Neither have I any wish for grandeur. The glittering baits of titles and honours are only for children and fools. But I conceive it a duty which every one owes to society, not to throw up that station in it which Providence has assigned him ; and having this conviction I could not marry into a station inferior to my own with the approval of my judgement, *which* alone could enable me to brave the censures of my acquaintance.

And now let me ask you, have you any *certain* livelihood to maintain me in the manner I have been used to live in ? Any *fixed* place in the rank of society I have [been] born and bred in ? No ! You have projects for attaining both, capabilities for attaining both, and much more ! But as yet you have *not* attained them. Use the noble gifts which God has given you ! You have prudence (tho' by the way this last proceeding is no great proof of it), devise then how you may gain yourself a modest but *settled* income ; think of some more promising plan than farming the most barren spot in the county of Dumfriesshire. What a thing that would be to be sure ! You and I keeping house at Craigenputtock ! I would just as soon think of building myself a nest on the Bass Rock. Nothing but your ignorance of the place saves you from the imputation of insanity for admitting such a thought. Depend upon it you could not *exist* there a twelvemonth. For my part, I would

not spend a month at it with an Angel. Think of something else then, apply your industry to carry it into effect, your talents to gild over the inequality of our births;¹ and then—we will talk of marrying. If all this were realised, I *think* I should have good sense enough to abate something of my romantic ideal, and to content myself with stopping short on this side idolatry,—at all events I will marry no one else. This is all the promise I can or will make. A positive engagement to marry a certain person at a certain time, at all haps and hazards, I have always considered the most ridiculous thing on earth: it is either altogether useless or altogether miserable; if the parties continue faithfully attached to each other, it is a mere ceremony; if otherwise, it becomes a galling fetter riveting them to wretchedness and only to be broken with disgrace.

Such is the result of my deliberations on this very serious subject. You may approve of it or not; but you cannot either persuade me or convince me out of it. My decisions when I *do* decide are unalterable as the Laws of the Medes and Persians. Write instantly and tell me that you are content to leave the event to time and destiny, and in the meanwhile to continue my Friend and Guardian which you have so long and so faithfully been, — *and nothing more.*

It would be more agreeable to etiquette and perhaps also to prudence, that I should adopt no middle course in an affair such as this; that I should not for another instant encourage an affection I *may* never reward, and a hope I *may* never fulfil; but cast your heart away from me at once, since I cannot embrace the resolution which would give me the right to it

¹ See Note on the “Carlyle Pedigree,” Letter 174, *infra*.

forever. This I would assuredly do if *you* were like the generality of lovers, or if it were still in my power to be happy independent of your affection ; but as it [is] neither etiquette nor prudence can obtain this of me. If there is any change to be made in the terms on which we have so long lived with one another, it must be made by *you* not *me*, I *cannot* make any.

All this I have written with my Mother's sanction ; if my decision had been more favourable to you, she might have *disapproved* it, but would not have *opposed* it. And this I think is more than you could expect, considering how little she knows you. — I shall not be comfortable till I hear from you again ; so I beg you will not keep me waiting. God bless you !

Ever affectionately yours,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 113

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

PENTONVILLE, 20 January, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — Your Letter has been here since Monday : I would have answered it directly, but a series of pressing engagements connected with the finishing of that Book, which I have all along been hurrying forward, occupied my head and hands, however my heart might be employed, and I had no moment of leisure to bestow on anything beside. The most clamorous of these demands are now satisfied, and I proceed to treat deliberately of this most serious matter. To do so rightly, I find somewhat difficult. It were easy for me to plant myself upon

the pinnacle of my own poor selfishness, and utter a number of things proceeding from a very vulgar sort of pride ; it were easy also to pour out over the affair a copious effusion of sentimental cant ; but to express in simplicity the convictions of a man *wishing* at least with his whole heart to act as becomes him, is not easy. Grant me a patient hearing ; for I have things to say that require a mature and earnest consideration from us both.

In the first place, however, I must thank you heartily for your candour. Your Letter bears undoubted evidence within itself of being a faithful copy of your feelings at the moment it was written ; and this to me is an essential point. I may also assure you that my love for you is unabated ; I know not that you were ever so dear to me as at this moment. Your resoluteness does not offend me ; on the contrary, I applaud it. I also must be resolute : woe to both of us if we cannot be so ! The miserable man is he who halts between two opinions, who would and would not, who “longs for the merchandise and will not part with the price.”¹ He who has dared to look his destiny however frightful steadfastly in the face, to measure his strength with its difficulties, and once for all to give up what he cannot reach, has already ceased to be miserable.

Your Letter is dictated by good sense and sincerity : but it shows me that you have only an imperfect view of my present purposes and situation ; there are several mistakes in it expressed or implied. It is a mistake to suppose that want of self-denial

¹ Cf. “You cannot have the ware and the money both at once : and he who always hankers for the ware without having heart to give the money for it,” etc. — “Meister’s Apprenticeship,” Bk. vi. p. 339 (Library ed.).

had any material share in causing this proposal: I hope I should at all times rather suffer pain myself than transfer it to you; but here was a very different case. For these many months the voice of every persuasion in my conscience has been thundering to me as with the trump of the Archangel: "Man! thou art going to destruction. Thy nights and days are spent in torment, thy heart is wasting into entire bitterness, thou art making less of life than the dog that sleeps upon thy hearth. Up, hapless mortal! Up, and rebuild thy destiny if thou canst! Up in the name of God, that God who sent thee hither for other purposes than to wander to and fro bearing the fire of hell in an unguilty bosom, to suffer in vain silence, and to die without ever having lived!" Now in exploring the chaotic structure of my fortunes, I find my affection for you intertwined with every part of it, connected with whatever is holiest in my feelings or most imperative in my duties. It is necessary for me to understand completely how this matter stands; to investigate my own wishes and powers in regard to it, to know of you both what you will do and what you will not do. These things once clearly settled, our line of conduct will be clear also. It was in such a spirit that I made this proposal; not, as you suppose, grounded on a casual jest of yours, or taken up in a moment of insane selfishness; but deliberated with such knowledge as I had of it, for months; and calmly decided on as with all its strangeness absolutely the best for both of us. There was nothing in it of the Love-and-cottage theory; which none but very young novel-writers now employ their thoughts about. Had you accepted it, I should not by any means have thought

the battle won: I should have hailed your assent, and the disposition of mind it bespoke, with a deep but serious joy, with a solemn hope, as indicating the distinct possibility that two true hearts might be united and made happy thro' each other, might by their joint unwearied efforts be transplanted from the parched wilderness where both seemed out of place, into scenes of pure and wholesome activity such as Nature fitted both of them to enjoy and adorn. You have rejected it; I think, wisely. With your actual purposes and views, we should both have been doubly wretched, had you acted otherwise. Your love of me is completely under the control of judgement, and subordinate to other principles of duty or expediency, your happiness is not by any means irretrievably connected with mine. Believe me, I am not hurt or angry: I merely wished to know. It was only in brief moments of enthusiasm that I ever looked for a different result. My plan was no wise one, if it did not include the chance of your denial as well as that of your assent.

The maxims you proceed by are those of common and acknowledged prudence; and I do not say that it is unwise in you to walk exclusively by them. But for me, my case is peculiar; and unless I adopt other than common maxims, I look upon my ruin as already sure. In fact I cannot but perceive that the stations from which we have looked at life and formed our schemes of it are in your case and mine essentially different. You have a right to anticipate excitement and enjoyment; the highest blessing I anticipate is peace. You are bound to pay deference to the criticisms of others and expect their approbation; I to pay comparatively little deference to their criticisms and to overlook their contempt.

This is not strange; but it accounts for the wide discrepancy in our principles and intentions, and demands the serious study of us both.

In your opinion about sacrifices, felt to be such, I entirely agree: but at the same time, need I remind your warm and generous heart that the love which will *not* make sacrifices to its object is no proper love? Grounded in admiration and the feeling of enjoyment, it is fit love for a picture, a statue or a poem; but for a living soul it is not fit. Alas, my Dearest, without deep sacrifices on *both* sides the possibility of our union is an empty dream. It remains for us both to determine what extent of sacrifices it is worth. To me, I confess, the union with a spirit such as yours might be, is beyond all price; worth every sacrifice, but the sacrifice of those very principles which would enable me to deserve it and enjoy it.

Then why not make an effort, attain rank and wealth, and confidently ask what is or might be so precious to me? Now, my best friend, are you sure that you have ever formed to yourself a true picture of me and my circumstances; of a man who has spent seven long years in *incessant* torture, till his heart and head are alike darkened and blasted, and who sees *no* outlet from this state, but in a total alteration of the purposes and exertions which brought it on? I speak not these things in the vain spirit of complaint, which is unworthy of me; but simply to show you how they stand. I must not and cannot continue this sort of life: my patience with it is utterly gone; it were better for me, on the soberest calculation, to be dead than to continue it much longer. Even of my existing capabilities I can make no regular or proper use, till it is altered.

These capabilities, I have long seen with regret, are painted in your kind fancy under far too favourable colours. I am not without a certain consciousness of the gifts that are in me; but I should mistake their nature *widely*, if I calculated that they would ever guide me to wealth and preferment, or even certainly to literary fame. As yet the best of them is very immature; and if ever they should come forth in full strength, it must be to other and higher ends that they are directed. How then? Would I invite a generous spirit out of affluence and respectability to share with me obscurity and poverty? Not so. In a few months I might be realizing from literature and other kindred exertions the means of keeping poverty at a safe distance; the elements of real comfort, which in your vocabulary and mine I think has much the same meaning, might be at my disposal; and further than this, I should think it injudicious to expect that external circumstances would materially assist me in the conduct of life. The rest must depend upon myself, and the regulation of my own affections and habits. Now this is what I would do, were it in my power: I would ask a generous spirit, one whose happiness weightily depended on seeing me happy, and whose temper and purposes were of kindred to my own; I would ask such a noble being to let us unite our resources, not her wealth and rank merely, for these were a small and unessential fraction of the prayer; but her judgement, her patience, prudence, her true affection, to mine; and let us try if by neglecting what was not important, and striving with faithful and inseparable hearts after what was, we could not rise above the miserable obstructions that beset us both, into regions of serene dignity,

living as became us in the sight of God and all reasonable men, happier than millions of our brethren, and each acknowledging with fervent and unspeakable gratitude that to the other he owed all, all. *You* are such a generous spirit; but your purposes and feelings are not such. Perhaps it is happier for you that they are not.

This then, is an outline, intended to be true, of my unhappy fortune and strange principles of action. Both I fear are equally repulsive to you. Yet the former was meant for a faithful picture of what Destiny has done for me; and the latter are positively the best arms which my resources offer me to war with her. I have thought of these things till my brain was like to crack. I do not pretend to say that my conclusions are indubitable; I am still open to better light; but this at present is the best I have. Do you also think of all this; not in any spirit of anger, but in that spirit of love and noble-mindedness, which you have always shown me. Anger? Good God! why should we be angry? Are we not alone in the world, each almost without a single counsellor save the other? Let us, my Dearest, unite our little portion of experience, and sit in solemn judgement on the interests of both, which are alike involved in the decision, and alike precious to us. And, if we must part (which may the God that made us both forbid!), let us part in tenderness, with the last warm kiss of love upon our lips, and go forth upon our several paths, lost to the future, but in possession of the past. Now, shame on me, if by these representations, I meant to bend your faithful spirit to any selfish purpose! Shame on me for a heartless Jew! Have you not loved me, have you not leant upon me as your guardian and

guide? O my Dearest, you *are* dear to me as the light of life: to see you truly good and happy is the cry of my inmost heart. It is only when I contrast my weakness with your wishes, that the despair of ever being yours comes over me.

You will think of these things and write me what you think. But the decision is most important; let us decide nothing rashly; let us postpone it till I see you in Scotland, which ought to be now in a very few weeks. After all, why if we love each other, should not everything be well? To your Mother, return my heartfelt thanks for her kind and tolerant opinion of me, which I hope it will be my study to deserve. What I think of her, you know better than she does, and it is needless to repeat it here.

I will not end in tragedy, tho' my Letter is gloomy enough in its import, and perhaps my sickness (greater today than usual) has given additional gloom to its expression. I will part in cheerfulness. Is that farm of yours *really* to be let? And where is it, and who has the letting of it? My Brother and I have long had a scheme of conjoint farming; and I feel more and more the essentialness of something like it to my recovery. Now why should we not be *your* tenants? It seems to me that I could delve and prune with ten times tenfold pleasure, if I thought my delving and pruning were in any shadow of a sense for *you*. I am quite serious in this: do not neglect to tell me when you write, and I will make the Boy look after it. You have no notion of my tolerance of places. After being every night for many years disturbed in my sleep by the noise of cities, and stunned and choked every day by their tumults and their smoke, *any*

thing with green grass upon it and blue skies above it has the air of Paradise to me. Now, write, my Dearest! Be good to me if you can; above all, be candid. May God bless you forever, and guide us to one another's hearts, if it be possible!

Yours wholly and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 114

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, 23, Southampton Street,
Pentonville, London*

HADDINGTON, '29 January, 1825.'

WELL, Dearest, you have criticised *my* Letter; it is now my turn to criticise *yours*. Be patient, then, and good, I beg; for you shall find me a severer critic than the Opium-eater.

First then, you complain that I have but an imperfect view of your situation and purposes. Now, I think I may complain with equal justice, that you have but an imperfect view of *my* meaning. This indeed is most probably no fault of yours: I wrote to you after a sleepless night, with an aching head, and an aching, anxious heart; and it is no wonder if in this condition, I failed to express myself so perspicuously as I wished. Thus, in what I said about self-denial, it certainly was *not* my meaning to reproach you with any want of it; but on the contrary to express my confidence in your magnanimity; your willingness at all times to prefer my happiness to your own. To say that "had you foreseen how unhappy your Letter was to make me, you would not have written it," surely implied that in writing

it, you had *not* foreseen how unhappy it was to make me. Now, in this case, there was no *occasion* for self-denial, and consequently you could not be charged with any want of it. Neither did I imagine that your proposal was grounded on my jest, or taken up in a moment of selfishness. I have too good an opinion of your sense, to suspect you of making a proposal like this with no better foundation, and conceived in no better spirit, to any one; and too proud a consciousness of your esteem, to suspect you of making it to *me*. It was not the idea of our union, but the idea of living at Craigenputtock, which I took to be grounded on my jest; and this was reasonable enough, seeing that my words were gravely quoted by way of text to your Letter. This much in justice to my understanding!

In the next place you assure me that you "are not hurt or angry." Thank Heaven you are not! But does not this imply that there is some room for your being hurt or angry; that I have done or said what might have hurt or angered another less generous than you? I think so. Now, room for disappointment there may be; but surely there is none for mortification or offence. I have refused my immediate positive assent to your wishes, because our mutual happiness seemed to require that I should refuse it; but for the rest, I have not slighted your wishes, on the contrary, I have expressed my willingness to fulfil them at the expense of everything but what I deem to be essential to our happiness. And so far from undervaluing *you*, I have shown you, in declaring I would marry no one else, not only that I esteem you above all the men I have ever seen, but also I am persuaded I should esteem you above all the men I may ever

see. What then have you to be hurt or angry at?

The maxims I proceed by (you tell me) are those of common and acknowledged prudence; and you do *not say* it is unwise in me to walk by them exclusively. The maxims I proceed by are the convictions of my own judgement; and being so, it would be unwise in me were I *not* to proceed by them, whether they are *right* or *wrong*. Yet I am prudent, I fear, only because I am not strongly tempted to be otherwise. My heart is capable (I feel it is) of a love to which *no* deprivation would be a sacrifice — a love which would overleap that reverence for opinion with which education and weakness have begirt my sex, would bear down all the restraints which *duty* and *expediency* might throw in the way, and carry every thought and feeling of my being impetuously along with it. But the all-perfect mortal who could inspire me with a love so extravagant, is nowhere to be found, exists nowhere but in the romance of my own imagination! Perhaps it is better for me as it is. A passion like the torrent in the violence of its course, might perhaps too, like the torrent, leave ruin and desolation behind. In the mean time, I should be very mad, were I to act as if from the influence of such a passion, while my affections are in a state of perfect tranquillity. I have already explained to you the nature of my love for *you*; that it is deep and calm, more like the quiet river, which refreshes and beautifies where it flows, than the torrent which bears down and destroys. Yet it is materially different from what one feels for a statue or a picture.

“Then why not attain rank and wealth?” you say,—and it is you who have said it, not I.

Wealth and rank, to be sure, have different meanings, according to the views of different people; and what is bare sufficiency and respectability in the vocabulary of a young lady may be called wealth and rank in that of a philosopher: but it certainly was not wealth or rank according to *my* views which I required you to attain. I merely wish to see you earning a *certain* livelihood, and exercising the profession of a gentleman. For the rest, it is a matter of great indifference to me whether you have hundreds or thousands a-year, whether you are a Mr. or a Duke. To *me*, it seems that my wishes in this respect are far from unreasonable, even when *your* peculiar maxims and situation are taken into account. Nor was it wholly with the view to an improvement in your external circumstances, that I have made their fulfilment a condition to our union; but also with a view to some improvement in my sentiments towards you which might be brought about in the meantime. In withholding this motive, in my former Letter, I was guilty of a false and ill-timed reserve. My tenderness for your feelings betrayed me into an insincerity which is not natural to me. I thought that the most decided objection to your circumstances would pain you less than the least objection to yourself; and accordingly let my denial seem to be grounded wholly on the former, while in truth it is, in some measure, grounded on both. But I must be sincere I find, at whatever cost!

As I have said then, in requiring you to better your fortune, I had some view to an improvement in my sentiments towards you in the meantime. I am not sure that they are proper sentiments for a Husband; they are proper for a Brother, a Father, a Guardian-spirit; but a Husband, it seems to me,

should be dearer still. This, then, independently of prudential considerations, would make me withhold my immediate assent to your proposal. At the same time, from the change which my sentiments towards you have already undergone during the period of our acquaintance, I have little doubt but that in time I shall be perfectly satisfied with them. One loves you (as Madame de Staël said of Necker) in proportion to the ideas and sentiments which are in oneself; according as my mind enlarges and my heart improves, I become capable of comprehending the goodness and greatness which are in you, and my affection for you increases. Not many months ago, I would have said it was impossible that I should ever be your Wife; at present, I consider this the most probable destiny for me.¹ And in a year or so perhaps, I shall consider it the only one. *Die Zeit ist noch nicht da* [The time is not yet here]!

Thus then, I have explained my mind to you as clearly and faithfully as I possibly can; and a strange, confused inconsistent sort of mind it appears to be! However, from what I have said, it is plain (to *me* at least) what ought to be the line of our future conduct. Do *you* what you can to better your external circumstances; always, however, subordinately to your own principles, which I do not ask you to give up, — which I should despise you for giving up, whether I approved them or no. While *I*, on the other hand, do what *I* can, subordinately to nothing, to better *myself*, which I am persuaded is the surest way of bringing my wishes to accord with yours.

¹ Miss Welsh tells Carlyle at a later date that she had held herself his affianced wife from this time onwards. — See *post*, Letter 166 (28th June, 1826).

And let us leave the rest to Fate, satisfied that we have both of us done what lies with *us* for our mutual happiness. Nevertheless, if you can point out any line of conduct, to my conviction better than this, you will find me ready and willing to follow it.

There is one passage in your Letter, which I cannot conclude without noticing: I mean that in which you talk about *parting*, and *going forth upon our several paths*. I have pondered this passage in various moods; and am at last come to the conclusion that it is to be understood — as we are bound to understand everything in the Scriptures derogatory to the justice and mercy of God — in a metaphorical sense; for I will not believe that you ever seriously thought of parting from me, of throwing off a heart which you have taught to lean upon you till it is no longer sufficient for itself! You could never be so ungenerous! *You* who for years have shown and professed for me the most disinterested, most noble affection! How could I *part* from the only living soul that understands me? I would marry you tomorrow rather! but then, our parting would need to be brought about by death or some dispensation of uncontrollable Providence. Were *you* to will it, to part would no longer be bitter, the bitterness would be in thinking you unworthy. If indeed your happiness was to suffer from your intimacy with me in our present relation, I would not blame you for discontinuing it; tho' I should blame you, perhaps, for not examining yourself better before you entered into it. But how can that be. Your present situation is miserable; it must be altered; but is it with reference to me that it must be altered? Is it I who have made it miserable? No! You were as unhappy before

we met as ever you have been since : the cause of your unhappiness, then, must be in other circumstances of your destiny, which I have no connection with, — no real connection, however much I may seem to have from being frequently associated with them in your mind. It is an alteration in these circumstances which your duty and happiness require from you, and not an alteration in your relations with me. But what need is there of my most weak arguments to dissuade you from a purpose which you can never have entertained ; which if you had entertained it for one moment, your own heart would have argued you out of, the next ? Oh no ! we will never part. Never !

Will you be done with this wild scheme of yours ? I tell you it will *not* answer ; and you must positively play Cincinnatus somewhere else. With all your tolerance of places, you would not find at Craigenputtock the requisites you require. The light of heaven, to be sure, is not denied it ; but for green grass ? Besides a few cattle-fields, there is nothing except a waste prospect of heather and black peat-moss. Prune and delve, would you ! In the first place there is nothing to prune ;¹ and, for delving, I set too high a value on your life to let you engage in so perilous an enterprise. Were you to attempt such a thing, there are twenty chances to one that you should be swallowed up in the moss, spade and all. In short, I presume, whatever may be your *farming* talents, that you are not

¹ There were several plantations of considerable extent at Craigenputtock. In 1880 (or thereabouts) £300 was paid into Carlyle's account by the tenant for timber cut from the woods on the estate. And as early as 1832 Carlyle had "larch-sticks" to dispose of.— See "Letters of T. Carlyle, 1826-36," ii. 42.

an accomplished Drover ; and nobody but a person of this sort could make the rent of the place out of it. Were you to engage in the concern, we should all be ruined together.

You will write immediately, won't you? And for Heaven's sake, say something to make me less unhappy than I am at present. There has been the weight of a millstone at my heart for these last two weeks. — I would have written sooner, but I have been tormented with headache, as usual, which unfits me for every exertion of thought, while it lasts.

Ever yours,
JANE B. WELSH.

LETTER 115

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

PENTONVILLE, 31 January, 1825.

MY OWN JANE ! You *are* a noble girl ; and your true and generous heart shall not be oppressed another instant under any weight that I can take from it. I ought to thank this villain of a *cold* with all its sickening influences, for having kept me at home today : had I gone to Shooter's Hill, I might have seen Mrs. Buller and the Orator ; but I should have missed the most delightful piece of news that could have visited my doubting spirit. This Letter is, I think, the best you ever sent me ; there is more of the true woman, of the essence of *my* Jane's honourable nature in it, than I ever saw before. Such calm quiet good-sense, and such confiding, simple, true affection ! I were myself a pitiable man, if it

did not move me. Had my last solemn Letter been directed to a common "accomplished Heiress," mercy! what a fume it would have put her into! Tears and hysterics; followed by all the abusive epithets in the romance vocabulary; objurgations and recriminations; till the whole concern went off like a rocket, leaving nothing but smoke and darkness behind it. In place of all which, you see in that very grave epistle nothing but the sincere attempt, however awkward, of a man that loves you faithfully, and longs with all his heart to find out the proper path for himself and you to walk in; and you come frankly forward with your own meek and clear and kind sentiments to help him in that arduous undertaking. Let us proceed in this spirit, my Dearest; and I feel confident the result will be blest to us both. It is not our circumstances alone, as you observe, but ourselves that require change: Fortune, niggard as she is, will not deny us the means of making one another happy, if we know how to use and deserve them. Shall I confess it, dear as you are to my heart, I feel that I do not love you with a tithe of that affection which you might merit and obtain from me. It seems as if I *dared* not love you! That nobleness of nature, that generous tho' aimless striving for perfection attracts me towards you as with the force of fascination: but my understanding seems to call upon me to beware, seems to tell me that situated and intensioned as we are, it can be for good to neither of us. A thousand times have I denounced the artificial misdirection and delusions that defaced the pure celestial ardour of your soul; a thousand times have I wished that you had been some humble maiden with no possession no accomplishment but the

ethereal spirit, the true fervent heart, which Nature gave you ; that you might have joined with me, mind and hand, in the great and only right pursuit of life, the *real* not *seeming* perfection of our characters, the proper guidance and contentment of the faculties that Providence has committed to our charge. Alas ! Jane, we are both far astray ! But we shall return, we shall ; and be good and happy after all our errors. Is there not a fund of honesty in both of us ? Have we not hearts to reverence true excellence, and judgements which must at length perceive it ? I have been sharply taught ; and you too seem to be finding out the truth. There is in that very Letter a spirit of genuine womanhood which gives me the most precious hopes. O my own Darling, *were* you but the being which your endowments indicate, with what entireness could I give up my whole soul to you, and love and reverence you as the fairest work of God, and *be* one heart and mind and life with you to the latest moment of my existence ! This is Elysian, and I swear it shall not all fail and pass away in vain. Is it not worth striving for ! To be enshrined in one another's hearts forever ; united by the bonds of Truth ; blest in each other beyond the power of Fate to ruin us utterly ! O that I could banish from myself and you the pitiful impediments and deceptions that distort our nature ! The rest were *all* within our reach. Think, then, study, strive along with me, my own brave Jane ! Let our love for each other be the Divinity that guides our steps to genuine felicity and worth ; and we shall bless forever the hour that first brought us together.

One sovereign aid in our progress I take to be *sincerity* ; and this I propose that we should prac-

tise more and more towards one another. For *us*, for our affection, there *is* no basis but Truth; let us know one another as we are and shape our conduct and principles by our united judgement. I blush to think how often other motives than real love for your permanent advantage have mingled in what I said to you; how often I have turned my words to the interest of the passing hour, and repressed the honest tho' discordant voice of truth that was speaking at the bottom of my heart, and might have chased the smile from your eye but would have profited you notwithstanding. It was wrong, and we have strength enough to take another course. It is the common fault of the thing called love:¹ but now that we have the hope, the glorious probability before us of passing our existence together, it is fit that we discard such errors as much as is in our power. Let us learn to speak truth to one another! It is a bitter morsel, that same truth, bitter nauseous morsel; but it is the grand specific of the soul. The man that dares to meet it in all its forms is happy, become of him what may. Depend upon it then, my Dearest, we must gradually introduce the custom of lecturing one another on our faults, and showing to each other aspects of our own minds that are far from pleasant! As yet, it seems to me, I am but in contact with you on some small corner of my being: but you shall yet see me and know me altogether. I hope you will not hate me; ultimately, I know you will not; but at anyrate you shall not be de-

¹ Cf. "Perhaps it is not out of season, if I tell you that the whole of what so many books, of what the world holds up to us and names love, has always seemed to me a fable." — "Meister's Apprenticeship," Bk. viii. ch. 4.

ceived. You abhor cant as deeply, and have as quick an eye for it, as myself or any one: it is our duty to help each other to get rid of it and destroy it utterly.

When I come back to Scotland (which will be directly) I mean to spend a whole fortnight, if your Mother will allow me, in lecturing you and being lectured! I have a thousand things to explain and get explained. Let us talk freely, let us unbosom ourselves to each other without reserve. The discrepancies that divide us will vanish, if light were thrown on them; at least they will be put upon the way of vanishing. Do you know, I heartily rejoice that you *cannot* write a book at present! Had you succeeded in these enterprises, certain milliners' apprentices might have adored you, and you would have had a rank among the Blues of this planet; but as a woman it would have proved your ruin. This is sure as fate. Gifts like yours are fit for something else than scribbling; and the way to cultivate them is to *make* them what you would have them seem and represent. Writing follows of course; when you have once attained the perfection of *practice*, it is easy to *depict* it. Otherwise I think it had better never follow. Vex not your heart on this subject: I know you will and must see it as I do; for I once saw it exactly as you. Do you think I need the voices of reviewing men (or rather *mannikins*) of Letters to show me that you are gifted and lovely? Could I not have guessed it for myself? It is not for writing that my heart will honour any one, or wish any one to honour me: it is for *being* in some measure what the object of all useful writing is only to *describe*.

But a truce with lecturing for the present! I

must absolutely give you a little respite. I am coming home, as I have told you, almost forthwith. That *Life of Schiller* is at length fairly off my hands : it is to be sent round the "Trade" to-morrow ; then I settle with the knaves, and bid adieu to them and their concerns. The Book will be an honest enough book, an octavo of 350 pages ; not destined for a long life ; but as it contains nothing that I judged disgraceful to me, my conscience is satisfied, and I care not one doit what the purblind Cockneys make of it, whether they tear it to pieces in their rascally Magazines or let it lie and rot forever on the shelves of the Bibliopolist. I thank Heaven that it is so with me ! That the "Fame" conferred by such unhappy members of society *is* every day growing more and more indifferent to me. "Fame !" — The very sound of it is distressing to my ears. O that I could show you the worshippers of it whom I have met with here ! To see how the shallow spirits of these Scribes are eaten up by this mean selfish passion ; how their whole blood seems to be changed by it into gall, and they stand hissing like as many rattle-snakes each over his own small very small lot of that commodity ! I swear to you I had rather be a substantial peasant that ate my bread in peace and loved my fellow mortals, tho' I scarcely knew that my own parish was not all the universe, than one of these same miserable metre-ballad mongers, whose heart is dead or worse, for whom creation is but a mirror to reflect the image of his own sorry self and still sorrier doings ! An hour with Coleridge or Procter would do more for you, than a month of my talking. You would forswear *fame* forever and a day ! There is a passage in this Schiller (by himself) which, if you make many

words, I will force you to get by heart, Madam, and repeat every day along with your devotions! It is my very creed, expressed with Schiller's eloquence.¹

Your copies of the Book you may expect in about a fortnight; but the Booksellers are a class of creatures whom it is unsafe to place any faith on. Fear not, you will see it soon enough. For myself, I leave London in a week: I go by Birmingham and Liverpool to Mainhill; rest there for a little space, and then most probably come up to Edinburgh, to arrange some future occupation. I have plenty of schemes; and a little trust in some of them. My health is bad, but not irrecoverable; and I have sworn by the Fatal Sisters that I will recover it and keep it so, tho' I take to cutting ditches for a livelihood. I believe with Badams that there is *no* organ about me specially deranged; only an over-worked system of nerves, "a spirit too keen for the case that holds it."² That must and shall be remedied: I must live in the country, and work with my muscles more and with my mind less. By and by it will all be well, and then —! — What a place this Craigenputtock must be! I declare I should like to see it. So you will not have me drowned in peat-bogs, useless as I am? Especially if the *spade* should be lost too! Devil take you!

On the whole I am leaving London with regret, and with the hope of often seeing it again. I think I have made one *friend* here, and that is almost like

¹ The passage alluded to is probably that given by Carlyle in his "Life of Schiller," beginning: "The Artist, it is true, is the son of his age; but pity for him if he is its pupil, or even its favourite."

² Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," Part III., "Death of Schiller."

an epoch in my life. Mrs. Strachey really likes me, and with all her obscurity of intellectual culture, she is an interesting true-minded woman. She loves and venerates nobleness of mind in others, and follows it more honestly than any creature I have ever seen — with *one* exception, whom if you should die guessing, you would never hit on. I have promised to make her acquainted with you, whom she already knows (whence I understand not) and respects for your conduct to the Orator and his dear Isabella. With the Orator himself I am sorry to part, tho' fortune has already parted us to a considerable degree, wherever we may be in place. He is a good man; tho' he cannot speak or act one hour without cant, he really means to be sincere. He loves one too, but the void your absence leaves in his heart is so very soon and so unscrupulously filled up that it were unwise to set much store by it. Poor fellow! He has his own trials waiting him. Rejoice that *you* came not near him! It would have shook the whole establishment! From stupidity, from cant, from quackery, Good Lord deliver us!

Now it will not be safe to write to me here any more. Will you have a Letter for me at Mainhill in ten days? I will *never* answer it while I live! Now is your heart lighter? You owe me ten kisses, which at compound interest already amount to a score. — Your poor head! Do go out and walk, and drive these G——s from you, and amuse yourself! It is all you want. Also love me forever. God bless thee!

Thine forever.

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 116

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Mainhill
(Forwarded to J. Badams, Esq., Birmingham)

HADDINGTON, 14 February, '1825.'

MY DEAREST, — You are welcome to Scotland again, since it must be so. I wished you to remain where you were; for London, it seemed to me, had more inducements to retain you than Scotland had to bring you back. But it was for you only to decide as to what you only understand.¹ And after all, I am persuaded that you are in the right; that you are more likely to find health and happiness among the honest unpretending hearts of your Fatherland than in the great City, with all its Poets and Orators and Bluestockings, which you have left behind you.

Indeed, it would be difficult for you to do anything that could make me doubt the propriety of your judgement: I know not how your spirit has gained such a mastery over mine in spite of my pride and stubbornness; but so it is. Tho' self-willed as a mule with others, I am tractable and submissive towards you; I hearken to your voice as to the dictates of a second conscience, hardly less awful to me than that which nature has implanted in my breast. How comes it you have this power over me? For it is not the effect of

¹ In Schiller's "Wallenstein" Max Piccolomini says:

"And what new fault have they to charge him with?

That he alone decides what he alone

Can understand?" — See Carlyle's "Life of Schiller," Part III.

your genius and virtue merely. Sometimes in my serious moods, I believe it is a *charm* with which my Good Angel has fortified my heart against evil. Be that as it may, your influence has brought me nothing but good.

When will you be here? Be sure you write beforehand; for I hate *surprises*, however agreeable. I am longing to see you again; to hear your travels' history since we parted; and to talk with you over all our concerns. But how *am* I to meet you *now*? Do you know I think it is more than probable that I will take to my own room, when you come, and not go out of it as long as you are in the house. Upon my word, Mr. Thomas Carlyle, I can hardly forgive you for bringing me into this very shocking predicament. Here am I blushing like an idiot whenever your name is mentioned, so that any body who looks at me, may read the whole matter in my face; and then to be *half-engaged*! I who have such a natural horror at engagements! It gives me asthma every time I think of it. And yet, such is the inconsistency of human nature, or of my particular nature, that I *would* not if I *might*, be free: "*Ce que j'ai fait, je le ferois encore*" [what I have done I would do again]. I cannot say this of much else I have done in my day. You will come however; and at all events, you will see my Mother and Miss G. I cannot think how this bur of a girl is to be got rid of. The term of her invitation expired last month, and here she is still, terrifying me by talking of what we are to do together weeks and months hence. These G——s are as tenacious as bugs of their quarters; when they have once found their way into a house, there is no driving them out again. I looked to the London project

for deliverance ; but this, I perceive, is to miscarry this Season, as it did the last : and I am not sorry. Now that you are gone, I should have little enjoyment in it, convinced as I am that Edward Irving's much vaunted friendship for me, is nothing more than a froth of professions. I will not quarrel with him, however. I love him still, after all he has done and all that he has not done, and I shall love him to the last,—*in memory* ; but I have ceased to admire him, to put trust in him ; he has disgusted me.

What a precious creature this Mrs. Strachey must be ! I am sure I shall like her, since she has the grace to be fond of you. How old is she ? Seriously you could not do me a more acceptable service than making me acquainted with a *woman* about my own years, whom I could really like. I have never found such a one : my female acquaintances are all either creatures of no characters, made up of seemings, or they are so cold, so vain and selfish, that my heart shrinks from them. Our sex is certainly less friendly than yours ; at least our affections are more easily perverted by self-interest. Men may be rivals, opponents in their fortunes, and yet be friends in their hearts, and fair towards each other's worth ; but woman the instant she is rivalled, becomes unjust. Mercy ! what jealousies, what envyings and heart burnings are among us ! I declare I would rather be a kitten and cry mew ! than live as I see many of my female acquaintances do, tearing each other's characters to pieces, and wearing out their lives in vanity and vexation of spirit. He was a wise man who thanked the gods that they had not made him a woman. There are twenty chances to one, that he would not have been *wise* if they had.

The fortnight is not out yet, and already I am looking for *the* Book. It will surely come this week! But Booksellers are not to be depended on, so I may be kept waiting for a month. I declare it is *you* who are "a consequence of the Fall of Adam"!¹ Why don't you scold your Bookseller, or "*thrash*" him into good-behaviour, if scolding will not do? I tell you I am dying to have this Book, — to see my heroic Max and Carlos and Posa and all my favourites, with *an air of you* about them! If it does not come soon, I will ring such a peal in your ears, as you have not heard the like of since the day you were at Lady Warrender's. Do you remember it? I think I outdid Xantippe² on that occasion; and it was nothing, — nothing at all to what I *can* do. Ask Catherine G., when you come, how long she has heard me rail at a time, and she will tell you what will make your hair stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine. How I should like to know when you will be here! Do write immediately and tell me. Give my love to your Mother, and a kiss to my poetical namesake. What has her little Muse been doing? or is it gone to sleep? Come!

Ever yours,

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

¹ See *ante*, beginning of Letter 110.

² The scolding wife of Socrates.

LETTER 117

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

BIRMINGHAM, 28 February, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — I must seem to you very little worthy of the kind punctuality with which you have attended to my wishes : it is a fortnight since you wrote, and for nearly a month you have heard no whisper of tidings from me. Yet in truth, I am but little to blame. The perversity of circumstances detained me in London till yesterday morning, for the last two weeks in the Orator's house ; and tho' I well remembered you and your anxieties, I found it next to impossible to take the simplest step for calming them. Twice I attempted writing to you ; twice the chaotic tumults of the Orator's hospitable but distracted mansion forbade me to proceed. A third time, almost laughing at my own ineptitude, I took my pen, and determined to tell you, tho' but half intelligibly, that I was well and loved you ; but just as I had finished the second page of my sheet, a messenger arrived with news that I must *instantly* set out on my way homeward, and of course postpone all talk with you till I reached Warwickshire ! I came last night ; and this morning your dear little Letter, after travelling thro' Dumfriesshire, hither, then to London and back again, was at last put into my hands. So that I am bound to expedition by a double tie ; and tho' Badams's great chemical tub itself (a thing somewhat larger than a parish church) should burst, and overflow the premises with oil-of-

vitriol, I will not rise from this spot, till I have quieted your good heart, and done away with all unpleasant calculations and misgivings on account of me. It is a shame that I should cost you a single moment's pain. How many men are there in England that have such a heart to care for them? To me it is worth more than kingdoms: I were worse than mad, if I did not prize it beyond all earthly things, and consider the duty of providing for its happiness as the soul of all my earthly purposes.

My projected movements, you perceive, have been altogether overturned; far from the danger of surprising you by my presence, I am yet a week from Annandale, and perhaps three weeks from you. The poor Book was ready on my part at the time predicted; but just two days before the appointed time of publication, our Engraver discovered that the plate¹ was incomplete, and could not be *properly* rectified in less than a fortnight! As I had myself recommended this man to the job, on the faith of Irving's testimony that he was an indigent *genius*, I had nothing for it but to digest my spleen in silence, and to tell the *feckless speldring*² of a creature, that as his future reputation depended on the work, he was at liberty to do his best, and take what time he needed for so doing. I settled with Hessey for my labour; had ten copies done up in their actual state for distribution in London; and so washed my hands of the concern, after exacting a solemn promise that they would lose *no* time in forwarding the rest to Edinburgh. The fortnight is already past and another fortnight to keep it com-

¹ The frontispiece, an engraving of Schiller.

² Feeble sprat.

pany ; yet I left Bull¹ still picking and scraping at his copper, still "three days" from the end of his labour ! So much for the patronage of genius ! Yet I suffer willingly ; for my purpose was good, and this poor Cockney has actually a meritorious heart ; and a meagre patient tho' dejected wife depends upon the scanty proceeds of his burin. In two weeks from the present date, I calculate that you *will* see *Schiller* ; sooner I dare not promise. It will do little, I conjecture, to justify your impatience ; yet as the first fruit of a mind that is one with yours forever, I know that it will meet a kind reception from you ; and with your approbation and my own, the chief part of my wishes in the way of *fame* are satisfied. I have not put my name to it ; for I desire no place among "the mob of gentlemen that write with ease" ;² and if mere selfish ambition *were* my motive, I had rather not be named at all, than named among that slender crew, as the author of a lank octavo with so few pretensions. I seem to see the secret of these things. Let a man be *true* in his intentions and his efforts to fulfil them ; and the point is gained, whether he succeed or not ! I smile when I hear of people dying of Reviews. What is a reviewer sitting in his critical majesty, but *one* man, with the usual modicum of brain, who thinks ill of us or well of us, and tells the Earth that *he* thinks so, at the rate of fifteen guineas a sheet ? The vain pretender, who lives on the breath of others, he may hurt ; but to the honest workman who understands the worth or worthlessness of his own performance, he tells nothing that was not far better understood already, or else he tells weak *lies* ; in

¹ The name of the engraver.

² See *ante*, Letter 63, *n*.

both of which cases, his intelligence is one of the simplest things in Nature. Let us always be true ! Truth may be mistaken and rejected and trodden down ; but like pure gold it cannot be destroyed : after they have crushed it and burnt it and cast it on the waters, they cry out that it is lost, but the imperishable metal remains in its native purity, no particle of it has been changed, and in due time it *will* be prized and made to bless mankind to all ages. If literature had no evils but false critics, it would be a very manageable thing. By the way, have you seen the last number of the *London Magazine* ? Taylor told me it had a "*Letter to the Reviewer of Meister*," by some man from Cambridge. I suppose it may be very stupid : but I have not read it, or the criticism it is meant to impugn. Goethe is the Moon and these are penny-dogs ; their barking *pro* or *con* is chiefly their own concern. I mean to send the venerable Sage a copy of this *Schiller* : I like him better than any living "man of letters," for he is a *man*, not a *dwarf of letters*.

Till this wretched Book of mine arrive in Edinburgh, and be at hand as a reference in my proposals, my own presence there cannot be attended with any tolerably satisfactory result. That consideration has occasioned or facilitated my loitering till now in the South. Irving wished to have "a week of talk " with me ; and I easily consented to make it two. Do not cease to love him, but do not think of visiting him. I feel sympathy for Irving : he is a true-hearted man at bottom ; but beleaguered with imbecility and folly and difficulty on every side. He has already had many distresses to encounter, and many more are yet laid up for him. But they are lessons which he needs ; for prosperity is a thing

he cannot do with. Disappointment clips away his vanity, makes real friendship precious to him, and brings out the true manly energy of his own character, which flattery and success never fails to pervert into a thousand inconsistencies. I have a new sermon of his for your Mother and you jointly. Let us not forget to love him; for with all his faults, where shall we find his fellow?

On the whole I have left him and London with regret. I regret London, not for the noisy excitements which its immensity is ever holding out; these indeed I hate; but for the fraction of true friendship which has been established for me in one or two of its many hearts, and which will keep a certain place there for me now when I am gone. You *shall* know Mrs. Strachey ere the world is done. She is to correspond with me; she has given me a fine gold pencil¹ with a still finer farewell Letter for a memorial! The "noble lady" too, Mrs. Montagu, does seem to have a touch of kindness for me, which she has striven by many elegant methods to express: she is a flatterer, but not a cozenor intentionally; you shall know her too by and by. When I contrast these things with icy Edinburgh, my heart upbraids the coldness of my true but hard and forbidding fatherland. I will try once more: I will seek for friendship in my own country as for hidden treasure, but if I cannot find it, I will stay no longer there. *Athens* is dear to me as the centre of all that is best in Scotland; but in my former state of frightful solitude, I will never more abide in it. *Nous verrons!*

My present purposes are firm as iron in their ob-

¹ With a seal at the top of it, bearing the motto "*Meliora latent.*"

ject, but still somewhat vague in the matter of their execution. In the country in about a year I expect to have regained my health. That blessed result is still far off, but I now think I distinctly *see* it. It seems to depend upon myself; and what am I, if I have not will enough to suffer any thing or do any thing for such a consummation? A few days I stay with Badams to receive his final precepts; then hasten to Annandale to arrange some plan of residence with my Brother and my Mother, for my abode if possible *must* be my *cwn*. Here I will live as by geometry; "exercise and temperance" (as the copy-books have it) shall be my laws, unalterable as those of Fate; I will work with moderation in my calling, and live in the firm hope that useful and happy activity will return to me. Believe it, my Darling, our happiness *is* in our own hands! Let us arouse the wisdom and good principle and serviceable endowments that are in us; let us lay aside every weight, above all let us utterly break with *Vanity and all its poisonous progeny*; and never doubt that we shall bless and be blessed in one another. Are we not already rich? Has not each of us a faith in the other? Do we not belong to one another, so that Destiny itself cannot sunder our hearts? Then, I say, if we are wise, we *may* be happy, in spite of all that can oppose us. It is not in external success, in wealth or fame, or in any of the modes of *reflected* excitements and solaces to self that the matter lies: it is in being right at heart, in following out the good and true, in limiting our ends to our means, and making our very purposes their own reward. We will try, at any rate; and if there is a Providence that cares for the well-intentioned among his creatures, He will prosper our endeavours.

As to my literary employments, I have still various plans before me. The translation of Schiller I continue to think, might prove a useful enterprise; and with proper encouragement, I am not disinclined to undertake it. Some people have been counselling me to translate *Wilhelm Tell* (the death of Gessler from it is in *the Book*) and have it brought upon the stage in London. Taylor & Hessey too have made me a sort of offer for a *Life of Voltaire* on the same principle as this of Schiller: it might be printed in Edinburgh; they would give £100 for the first edition, provided I would let them have all the other editions (if any) at £130 each. I declined, for the present, disposing of the other editions at all; and here we rest. If I can find nothing better, I may close with their offer: but they are drivelling men, and I love them not. Besides, as I wish to live in Edinburgh, it were good that I attempted to form relations there, rather than elsewhere. A few weeks will decide.

Meanwhile I am contented, and better prepared than usual for any sort of fate. In about three weeks, I will have your kiss of welcome! You will hide yourself, will you? Depend on me for seeking out your haunts! It is the will of Fate, and what can a poor girl do? Submit with a good grace to the unavoidable; and be thankful that it is not worse. — I rejoice to hear of your precious gifts in the scolding line. . . . But you are a good creature in spite of Lady Warrender's, and I will try to be no more a fool. — It is dark; and I must end this miserable Letter, which I pray you to forgive for its unspeakable ineptitudes: I have written it in the midst of confusion and hurry. Will you write to Mainhill, in a week after this arrives? I will tell

you more particularly of my plans. Do now like a good lassie as you are. Put away these odious G——s if you can; and love me forever. God bless you, Jane! —

I am yours *auf ewig*,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 118

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Mainhill

HADDINGTON, 13 March, '1825.'

REALLY, Dearest, my affection for you (as Mrs. West says of her son) is very *severe*. A twelve-month of the most devoted attentions, on your part, will hardly atone for the uneasiness you have occasioned me, one way and another, within the last few weeks. I begin to think the little Doctor¹ had some reason, after all, for the terrible charge which he brought against you. You *are* a most uncertain gentleman. There was I, on the faith of your promises, waiting and waiting for two whole weeks, counting every day and hour, and turning pale at the sound of every coach-horn, — all for nothing! And it was not illness or any necessity which detained you; you merely staid *to talk* with the Orator. *Eh bien!* I hope you will not take many fortnights of talk, by the way; or my patience, I am afraid, will hardly hold out; and woe to thee, Mr. Thomas Carlyle, if it does not! However, tho' I was sadly disappointed when your Letter arrived, I am glad (as it has happened) that you did not come when you said: I have been ill ever since,

¹ Dr. Fyffe. — See *ante*, Letter 81.

and little out of bed, so I could not have been with you tho' you had been here. But now that my head is mending again, you may come when you like.

I never wished so earnestly to see you in my life. It seems as if my destiny depended on this visit, and we were now to understand each other for the first time. Heretofore we have never met but amidst the most vexatious impediments, in circumstances when I *dared* neither *suffer* your confidence nor show you mine : but now our situation is different ; what I dreaded to think of is past, and there are no longer any reasons for reserve betwixt us. On the contrary, there are the strongest reasons for being open and sincere. Would to Heaven all doubts and uncertainties were ended ! and that we loved *each other* as both of us *might* love ! How happy, how unspeakably happy should we be ! And what hinders it ? Nothing but the miserable perversion of my own sentiments ! It is this which raises up a barrier of separation betwixt us ; but for this my whole soul would rush to meet yours, and be one with it forever. Surely I must be the weakest of creatures ! I know where the evil lies, and do nothing to mend it : my existence is a sort of waking nightmare ; I see the *right* way straight before my eyes, — the only way of escape from the disquietudes which pursue me, and I have not power to follow it. Yet, do not despise me or altogether despair of me. I hope that ultimately, I shall be everything — anything — you wish. *Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte* :¹ “ One bold

¹ “ It is only the first step that is troublesome.” Voltaire tells Madame Deffand that one of her *bon-mots* is quoted in the “ Notes of ‘ La Pucelle ’ : *Il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte*.”

stroke to break the bell in pieces and thou art delivered!"¹

What a multitude of things I have to ask you and explain to you, which I cannot undertake on paper! And, very possibly, when you are come, they will all be gone out of my head. It is particularly unfortunate that I never *can* talk when I have got anything to say; and that at all times, I can be anything easier than myself. I have lived so long among people who do not understand me or sympathize with me,—been so long accustomed to refrain and disguise myself for fear of being laughed at, that I have grown as difficult to come at as a snail in a shell; and what is worse, I cannot come out of my shell when I wish it.—This dumpling of a Highland girl too, will be sadly in the way. I have tried everything I can think of to make her quarters too hot for her; but no coldness or crossness can induce her to decamp. She is quite a Spaniel in her nature: the worse I use her, the more she fawns on me and follows me. I cannot shake her off for an instant all the day long. And then she annoys me so with her awkward imitation of my dress and manners. For some days past, she has been making the most hideous grimaces that were ever beheld; and when I insisted on knowing the meaning of them, she told me she was

It is likely, however, that Miss Welsh found this French proverb in Gibbon. In a note the historian sarcastically writes: "The Catholic martyr [after being beheaded] had carried his head in his hands a considerable way; yet on a similar tale, a lady of my acquaintance once observed, '*La distance n'y fait rien; il n'y a que le premier pas qui coûte.*'" — "Decline and Fall," ch. xxxix.

¹ From "The Confessions of a Fair Saint," "Meister's Apprenticeship," Bk. vi.

merely trying to turn up *her* eyes as I did mine, it looked so very *pooty*! I could hardly keep from beating the creature.

You will write immediately? and from *Edinburgh*, I hope. So you are for living *there* now? I do not think you know, Dear, what you would be at, — at least I am sure *I* do not. One day you are for turning Farmer and living in a wilderness; and just when I have pictured to myself the deliciousness of a country-life, away you are bent on settling in *Edinburgh* (where certainly there are no great conveniences for farming); or if *Edinburgh* does not answer, there is *London* in reserve. What *do* you wish? You will *tell* me in a fortnight at *farthest*, will you not? I am out of all temper about the Book; indeed I rather think I will not read a word of it now when it comes. God bless *you*, however!

I am ever yours,

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

LETTER 119

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

MAINHILL,¹ 23 March, 1825.

THANKS, my Dearest, for the Letter which lay waiting me, and still more for the *severe affection*, which it recorded and formed proof of. I perceive I must by and by begin to respect you in a new capacity, that of a self-denying, meek philosopher: the patience you have displayed of late is really altogether exemplary. I do not know that I myself,

¹ Carlyle reached Mainhill on Saturday, 19th March.

philosopher by trade, could have displayed such tolerance to you, a much more *tolerable* person, had I figured your conduct to be half so fluctuating and irregular as you consider mine. In time, as you say, I hope all things of you.

I do not reckon your Doctor at all a deep *Seelenforscher* [psychologist]; yet it is possible enough that in my case he may have some degree of reason for his accusation. Between deciding slowly and correctly, and deciding rapidly and wrong, there is a strict mathematical line of propriety, as between every two extremes of habit; and whether I am travelling steadily along this line, is a thing which often gives me more than doubt. Yet slowness of decision is an evil; as *indecision* or the incapacity of *ever* deciding firmly is the great bane of life, the fatal deficit which wrecks the character and happiness of millions. Fortunately, however, in the present instance, I have escaped this misery; it is less in my procedure than in my manner of describing it that your charge is grounded. My scheme of action was determined on, with as little loitering as consisted with what I thought mature deliberation; and it has been advancing, ever since, towards fulfilment, as steadily as the perversity of circumstances, chiefly depending upon other people, would permit. What a fool you must think me, with this imaginary plan of taking up my residence in Edinburgh! No, my dear Counsellor! towered cities with their hideous tumult and contamination, are a horror to me, till my health is reëstablished. To live in Edinburgh is a project as yet dubious and far off: it is only with the literature of Edinburgh that I wish to be connected, and to hold communication at a safe distance of seventy statute miles, till my present and

most pressing object is attained. Then, indeed, London and Edinburgh and "all places that the eye of heaven visits" are to me "ports and happy havens."¹ I can turn whither circumstances may direct me; tho' if nothing special should occur to change my way of life and business, I had rather for many reasons carry it on in my native country than in any other. "O immaculate genius!" I hear you exclaim; "and why did'st thou linger talking with the Orator, or dawdling in the sooty purlieus of Brummagem and Manchester, wasting precious time, and suffering all thy purposes, wise or foolish, to stagnate uncommenced? O faultless monster, wherefore did'st thou this?" Fair and softly, my Dear! things are not as they seem. With my utmost exertions, I know not but that I am yet too soon for doing any business in Edinburgh; and as to other business, I assure you much has been accomplished already. This very morning, they awoke me with the tumult of loading carts with apparatus for Hoddam Hill,² a *farm* of which I, or Brother Alick for me, am actually tenant! Think of this, and reverence my *savoir-faire*! I have been to see the place (secured for me in my absence); and I like it well, so far as I am interested in it. There is a good house, where I may establish myself in comfortable quarters; the views from it are superb; there are hard smooth roads to gallop on towards any point of the compass; and ample space to dig and prune, under the pure canopy of a wholesome sky. The

¹ "All places that the eye of heaven visits
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens."

"King Richard II," Act i. sc. 3.

² For a description of Hoddam Hill, see "New Letters and Memorials," i. 3-8.

ancient Tower of *Repentance* stands on a corner of the farm ; a fit memorial for reflecting sinners. My Mother and two little Sisters go with us at Whitsunday ; we expect to manage well. Here then will I establish my home, till I have conquered the fiend that harasses me ; and afterwards my place of retreat, till some more suitable one shall come within my reach. I have estimated the good and the evil of the undertaking as correctly as I could : the former seems distinctly to preponderate ; and the philosopher has nothing more to do but study to conquer or forget the latter.

So, my Dearest, you must *not* revoke your approbation of a rural life ; for your sanction of my schemes is a thing which I require for prosecuting them with spirit. Like you I look forward with anxiety and impatience to our meeting : much must be considered then, much must be determined. It behooves us to think calmly of our affairs, and these are affairs on which it is difficult to think with calmness. Let us try, however ; the period of romance and extravagance should now be past with us ; it is only clear judgement guided by prudence and integrity that can carry us thro' in safety. Meanwhile, my Dearest, let not your kind heart be troubled. The chaos of circumstances still lies before you to order as you please. Consider me and all that I have and am, as altogether yours, to take or to reject, according to your will. Choose in your fortune the path that promises most plausibly to lead you to happiness, and true, not seeming honour, and count on me and all my humble stock of resources to aid you to the uttermost in pursuing it. This is not mere cant : I feel and ought to feel in this manner. Since the earliest period of our intercourse, your part has



HODDAM HILL

been kindness and generosity, and forgetfulness of many petty things which another would have remembered : my part has been little more than vain wishes for your welfare ; and these, however vain, I mean to keep with me and endeavour with such success as shall be granted me to accomplish, so long as there is any hope, or use in entertaining them. After all, I do not see that there is any room for desperation. Each of us, I believe, would regard it as the highest happiness of our union to make the other happy : we are both honest creatures, and love each other honestly : it is strange if our combined understanding, faithfully and disinterestedly applied to our concerns, will not direct us safely thro' their intricacies. It is necessary, as you say, and every way fit that we should now communicate unreservedly. Hitherto even in each other's company, we have seen each other thro' a glass darkly ; steering carefully amid pitiful perplexities which locked up our confidence, and gathering each other's sentiments from faint and dubious indications. Let us now see each other face to face ! There wants only a full and frank explanation of our purposes and situations, the free light of day to be thrown over every corner of our circumstances ; and the right path thro' them cannot fail to appear. Dread nothing, my own Jane ! Which of us is the selfish in heart ? Neither. Which of us is the blind and prejudiced in judgement ? Neither. What then do we fear ? The strength or the weakness of our *means* is nothing to our happiness, if it be rightly estimated, and managed. The sparrow on the house-eaves is happy ; yet its means are very small. Let us but abjure VANITY, the head and front of mortal sin and misery ; let us utterly declare war against it in all its branches,

and hunt it from our spirits; and believe me, the rest is easy. At all events let us *love one another to the end!* I often think of losing you, and how my patience would support it: but I trust the experiment will not be tried on me.

I wait for Letters from Edinburgh to appoint my setting out: I calculate on being there next week; I will write to you whenever I arrive. Have you actually got *the Book*, and refused to open it? I declare I myself feel almost of your humour: these unfortunate persons drivelled and dallied about it so long, that it is almost a pain to me to think of aught connected with them. Nevertheless let us learn to be patient, and that the Universe was made for others as well as for us! Next publishing, I hope we shall lose less time.—I can easily appreciate your multiplied anxieties and disappointments; but you will forgive me, the innocent or guilty cause of them, me whom you have already forgiven so much. We *shall* meet at last; and in return for my delays and failures, I will stay with you *as long as you will let me*. Am not I a generous youth? Upon my honesty, you do me injustice: I am like other blessings, you will never know the worth of me till you have lost me. *Will* not that “dumpling of a girl” be gone? I pity you, and may soon pity myself, with her. And yet poor “dumpling”! she must live as well as others.—I could find you a far better pupil than this Highlander, if you felt didactically inclined. The little Poetess is grown a tall girl (I was two years mistaken in her age),¹ and bids fair to be a genius in good earnest! She has

¹ Carlyle on sending Miss Welsh a copy of his sister Jean's Poetical Letter had written that the little poetess was nine years old. She was really eleven.

gained unfading honours here by extracting a very tolerable knowledge of arithmetic and grammar from the Schoolmaster of the village; a miracle scarcely inferior to that of Moses when he drew water from the thirsty whinstone. In fact the creature has fine faculties, and a true honourable spirit: it seems to me, at times, a pity that such a mind should be expended on baking and churning. I am seriously meditating to take charge of her myself. On the day of my return, she came running bare-head from her school in the village to investigate the loading of the coach; I pulled down the window, and her face grew scarlet: I liked the creature.—Write to me if you have time within a week: if not I will write on my arrival. God bless you Dearest.

I am ever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

Is your head recovered? What a monster is this headache! Was it study or cold or accident that brought it on? I pray you for Heaven's sake to take care. Ill health is the evil which above all others I have dreaded for you; I would not for the whole Universe that you should be as I am. No, no! That must *not* be! Send the dumpling away, and be a good girl, and all will be well.—My kindest love to your Mother: one of the copies of *Schiller*¹ is

¹ On the fly-leaf of Miss Welsh's copy of the First Edition of "Schiller" there is written in Carlyle's hand: "*Zum Mädchen das mich beseelt, das die Hoffnung meines Lebens ist,*

"Gewidmet und geeignet."

(To the maiden who animates me, who is the hope of my life, dedicated and made her own.)

This special copy was gilt and bound in dark-green morocco.

A copy of the Second Edition of "Schiller" bears this inscription in Carlyle's hand:

for her. Irving's "Missionary Sermon" is *between* you: I will bring it when I come. Before the next week end —! — Will you be good? Yes, you will. *A Dieu!*

Carlyle came to Edinburgh (from Mainhill) in April to consult with Brewster, Tait, etc., about literary work for himself. There was some talk of founding a Literary Newspaper, with Lockhart and Carlyle in charge of the Belles Lettres department and Brewster of the Scientific; but the scheme did not take effect. Carlyle finally arranged to proceed with a selection and translation of specimens of German Fiction, to be published by Tait in a series of volumes under the title of German Romance. While negotiations were going on, he paid a long visit to Haddington. On his return to Edinburgh he wrote the following Letter to Miss Welsh, and received in reply Letter No. 121, a little before leaving for Mainhill. Both these Letters are saddish in tone, naturally, considering the untoward circumstances in which the lovers were now placed. Tho' they loved each other tenderly and devotedly, the prospect of their union seemed remote and uncertain. Carlyle was not in a position to marry and support a wife, and his outlooks for ever becoming so by the fruits of literature were far from promising. Miss Welsh was the possessor of a small patrimony, — £200 a year, or a little less, from Craigenputtock. But even this was uncertain: the farm was sometimes unlet, and sometimes the tenant could not make the rent out of the place. Two hundred a-year with what might be gained by Carlyle's pen would have sufficed the young couple to begin on; but there remained Mrs. Welsh to be provided for. She had been left by Dr.

“ To Jane Carlyle
With memory of the *First* Edition :

Her Own.
T. C.

LONDON, 26 Oct., 1845.”

Welsh's sudden death altogether and literally penniless; and at their recent meeting Carlyle had himself advised Miss Welsh to make over to her Mother the life-rent of Craigenputtock and the ownership of the little house in Haddington in which Miss Welsh was born. The lovers parted in the understanding that this should be done; and in the knowledge that they were both equally poor and dependent for the future on their own industry and the favour of fortune.

Before leaving Edinburgh for home Carlyle selected a number of German Books and took them with him to Mainhill, where he arrived about the 12th of May, and staid until Hoddam Hill was got ready for his occupation.

LETTER 120

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

24, SALISBURY STREET, Friday-morning,
'6th May, 1825.'

MEINE HERZENSLIEBSTE! — I cannot take to any work till I have written you a Letter: and yet except that I am sad and sick at heart at parting with you, I know not aught I have to say. Even this might be supposed without saying it; to have parted with you in so dreary and constrained a mood would have sickened a heart still harder than mine. O my Dearest! I boasted of being grown a Stoic, and I find there are things which could make a girl of me yet. Ever since I left you, the farewell, which I *could* not imprint upon your lips, has been sounding in melancholy tones thro' my inmost soul. Last night I opened Goethe; but his wisdom to me was foolishness; I could do nothing but gaze into

the fire, or listen to the tempest, and keep recounting all the tender things I should have said to you, all the harsh ones I should have suppressed, and picturing, on the most sable canvas, past and future images of weeping, thwarted love. Sometimes I fancied our parting ominous; that you would die, and I should never see you more! O God! If Thou wouldst not — But there is no use in this, it is all a dream!

I have looked at your paper, and secured it as my choicest treasure. If you have not the gift of speaking with the voice, you can speak with your actions to the very core of the heart. This little token is mine; it addresses all that is sacred and all that is tender in my nature; I must be dead to manliness and mercy if I forget it or its import. O Jane! What a thing I am! How have you patience with me! “The end of man is an action, not a thought”:¹ I have told you this a hundred times, and yet how sadly does my own practice contradict it! What have I ever done to merit so much love from you, what shall I ever do to maintain it and repay it! If prayers could make you happy, you were the happiest of mortals.

Excuse this whining: I ought to be consoling you in your sorrows, not afflicting you by recounting my own. There is no use in the philosophy of comfort; the whole remedy for suffering is diligent action; let us both apply it in our several spheres, and the result will be peaceable and blessed. After all, where *is* the bugbear? We are alive, and love one another to the end of our existence: a few more sad partings, and we meet, to part no more for ever. If we are wise, we shall and must be happy.

¹ ARISTOTLE, “Ethics,” x. 9. 1.

Courage! *Le bon temps viendra*: and I prophesy without fear that we shall both deserve it and enjoy it.

Now will you tell me that you are still good to me, and busy and composed in heart, and that your headache is away, and I shall think you happy, and depart in peace. Will you write me a Letter however short on Sunday? Do, my Dearest, if you please. I know you will, when I say that it will do me good. I will answer it the moment I reach home. Be diligent, and encourage me to be so, and we set Fortune at defiance. *En été nous nous reverrons!* [In Summer we shall meet again!] The farewell kiss shall add its tenderness to the kiss of welcome. We shall talk and counsel without let or hindrance; for frank warm kindness will be about us both. Think what is to be done, and when and how; and tell me without reluctance or reserve. Am I not yours entirely and forever, to dispose of as you please?

But this is "thought not action," again: I must leave you and conclude my business, at least commence it, and fly from the pestilence of smoky stony Athens. As yet I have spoken to no one, but three words to the landlady of these apartments. No word from Crabb [Robinson]: to-day I must see Brewster and Sir W. Hamilton. On Monday morning I shall have your Letter? Do, Jane: it will give solace to yourself as well as me; there is ease in free speech, I am already better since I began to tell you that I was sad. Have you begun your writing? Do begin it forthwith; and think that it is for me you write. Is your head recovered? For the love you bear me, my own Jane, be careful, be solicitous about your health!

Sickness is our only foe : O let us not so fearfully extend its empire ! Were *you* sick, what would become of us ?

And now my Darling, I must take my leave. Adieu my Dearest, *mein ewig liebstes Weib* [my ever best-loved woman] ! Write on Sunday or sooner if you can.

I am ever, ever,

Your Brother and Friend,

THOMAS CARLYLE.

LETTER 121

*Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Mrs. McLeod's,
24, Salisbury Street, Edinburgh*

‘ HADDINGTON,’ THE SANCTUM,¹ Sunday Morning,
‘ 8 May, 1825.’

BEST AND DEAREST,— I believe I am going to lose the faculty of writing, as I have already lost the faculty of speech. For this half hour and more I have been trying to express to you some of the hundred things that are in my heart ; and I can find *no words*, at least none but such as seem cold and inadequate to what I feel. Well ! no matter ! You know already that I love you with all my soul ; that I am sad, *very* sad at parting with you ; and shall not be otherwise than sad till we meet again. And knowing this, you may easily imagine all that I *would* and *cannot* say.

I have but a sorry account to give of myself since your departure : my head is still aching very dili-

¹ “ The Sanctum ” is probably the little room just behind the dining-room in Dr. Welsh’s house,— now called “ Carlyle House.”

gently, and none of my tasks are yet commenced. Nevertheless I have been far from idle: I have *papered a box* for my Mother; re-established order and elegance in the *Sanctum*; and put all things in readiness to commence operations on Monday. With the help of some unfinished drawings and other wares, I have made this the prettiest little room you ever saw: and here I will sit four hours a-day at the tasks which you have assigned me; in spite of all fools whatever. No criticisms shall prevent me from following your counsels and the dictates of my conscience. The miserable Lilliputians! they shall not bind *me* with their threads! I am free! Thanks to my love for you which has made me so! I will walk too, every day, and do all things that you bade me: Yesterday I was at *Paradise*. Alas! *Paradise* no more: *Ich bin allein* [I am alone]. I sat meditating in the arbour (*not on the mind of man*)¹ till I nearly fell asleep; and then walked sadly home again, resting at all the places where we used to rest. The sun was bright and the place looked as lovely as ever; but I no longer wished it *mine*. O No! The little Fairy's box were worth twenty such residences!

Indeed I am very sad. I say to myself every minute, "I am alone, there are leagues of distance between me and my *only* Friend; and who knows that I shall ever see him again?" It is very weak to be so dispirited when everything promises fair; when our happiness seems to depend almost wholly on ourselves; but I cannot help it. Oh, for the wings of a dove! that I might fly away to your side and gather consolation and courage from your lips! I would take flight this very instant. But,

¹ Ed. Irving's phrase.

alas ! I have no wings ! no wishing-carpet ! no Fairy-box ! and to visit you in any ordinary fashion would, in the present posture of affairs, be ill-advised. Patience, then. It cannot be many weeks before I am in Nithsdale ; and then, my beloved Brother — O more than Brother ! — we meet again, and you will take me *home* with you, and we shall be happy, happy as the day is long, shall we not Dear ? In the mean time, you will write to me often, and without constraint. No one shall (“ means in the third person to promise or threaten ”)¹ see your Letters. They are the only pleasure I have, and I am determined to enjoy it to the full. I kept the last to myself, and purpose to do the same with all future ones. Moreover, you will continue to love me very dearly, — more dearly than you ever loved Margaret Gordon,² — for with all my faults I do deserve it of you. Well, I am a great fool and no fraction of a Philosopher : and you, Mr. Socrates, are not overwise. But I expect we shall (“ in the first person, simply futurity ”) both improve.

The [enclosed] Letter for you is come this minute. I hope it is from Mrs. Strachey. Will you write to all these people the very first leisure day you have ? Their affection for you is worth cherishing. I do love them for loving you so well.

I forgot to give you any message to your Brother, tho’ it was several times in my mind. Pray tell him how much I was gratified by his book ; and that but for the awkwardness of beginning a correspond-

¹ Carlyle had evidently been explaining to Miss Welsh the proper use of *shall* and *will*, and she here repeats part of the rules.

² For some account of this lady see Appendix B, Note Two.

ence with an almost stranger, I would have written to him ere now. By and by we shall be better acquainted, I expect; and then he shall hear from me as often as, perhaps oftener than, he likes. — You must lay the blame of my detestable writing on the new Mail-coach regulations: my Letter, I find, must be in the Post-office by two o'clock. — God bless you, *meine Seele* [my Soul].

Yours forever and ever,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 122

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

MAINHILL, 22 May, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — I will write to you today, lest you should get uneasy about me or discontented with me; not because I have the slightest particle of tidings that can interest you to communicate, or the slightest particle of speculation that can profit you. When I have said that I am well and good to you as ever, and busied solely with the most prosaic occupations, little more remains for me to tell you.

I am living here in the middle of confusion worse confounded: the cares that occupy me are not those of the Philosopher on paper but of the Philosopher *in foro*; it is not the talents of the *bel esprit* but those of the upholsterer that will stead me. There is no syllable of translation, far less of composition (save of bed-hangings, and green or yellow washes), nor will there be for two good weeks at least; nothing but cheapening and computation, and fight-

ing with the pitiful details of Whitsunday¹ and future housekeeping. I have read nothing, but half of one German novel, last Sunday! Not long ago, all this would have made me miserable; but at present I submit to it with equanimity, and even find enjoyment in the thought that in this humblest of the spheres of existence I am *doing* all I can to save my spirit and my fortunes from the shipwreck which threatened them, and to fit me for discharging to myself and others, whatever duties my natural or accidental capabilities, slender but actually existing as they are, point out and impose upon me. Alas, Jane! there is *no* Bird of Paradise; nothing that can live upon the odour of flowers, and hover among pure ether, without ever lighting on the clay of Earth! The eagle itself must gather sticks to build its nest, and in its highest soarings keep an eye upon its creeping prey. Once I thought this a sad arrangement; now I do not think so. "The mind of man" is a machine considerably more complex than a pepper or even coffee mill; there is a strength and beauty where at first there seemed only weakness and deformity; our highest happiness is connected with our meanest wants. I begin to approve of this: at anyrate, *Wir sind nun einmal so gemacht* [we are indeed so made], and there is an end of it.

One thing that pleases and consoles me at present is my increased and increasing faith in the return of health, the goal of all these efforts. I am already *wonderfully* better than when you saw me: I am a driveller, if in spite of all impediments from others

¹ A Scottish Term-day, for removals,—the 26th of May in those years.

and myself, I do not grow completely well. The thought of this is like a second boyhood to me : glimpses of old purposes and feelings dawn on my horizon with an aspect more earnest but not less lovely ; I swear that I will be a *wise man*, that thou my Darling wilt be good and wise also ; and if so, what can hinder us from being happy and active, what more have we to wish for ?

I more and more applaud myself for having fled from towns, and chosen this simple scene for the commencement of my operations. Heaven pity those that are sweltering today along the fiery pavements of London, begirt with smoke and putrefaction and the boundless tumults and distractions of that huge tread-mill ! Here I can see from Hartfell to Helvellyn, from Criffel to the crags of Christenberry ; a green unmanufactured carpet covers all the circle of my vision, fleecy clouds and the azure vault are above me, and the pure breath of my native Solway blows wooingly thro' all my haunts. Internally and morally, the difference is not less important in my favour. Stupidity and selfishness make up the general character of men in the country as they do in towns ; but here one has the privilege of freedom from the sight of it ; all dunces and Turks-in-grain, one transacts his painful hour of business with, and packs away, with an implied injunction, peremptory tho' unpronounced, not again to trouble one till another hour of business shall arrive. " But then Society ? " — There is little of it on Earth, very little : and unhappy is the man whose own door does not enclose what is worth all the rest of it ten times told. My own Jane ! you cannot think how I rejoice that your tastes in this point correspond so completely with my own. O if I had

thee, in peace and happiness, within my parlour, tho' all the Reviewers and scribent hacks and blues and "literary characters" in nature should forget that I existed! *Will* the time come, think you? Yes, it must and shall, and then —! —

But alas for poor "divine Philosophy."¹ If I think of this I shall soon lose sight of her, and instead of becoming a wise man become a foolish boy. Let us leave it then. I should have told you in plain prose, in an earlier portion of my sheet, that I arrived here ten days ago, having hastily collected some forty tomes of German fiction, and fled from Edinburgh as from a pest-house, where day after day my state was growing more intolerable. Thanks for your dear Letter: I know you are a good creature, and *cannot* hate me, if you would. I was in such a haste that I forgot a number of things, among others (*proh pudor!*) the good Sherrieff's² message to Beugo the Engraver! You must make my peace with the worthy Sherrieff: I *am* heartily sorry for my gross omission; but I was sick almost to distraction while in Edinburgh; and I found his Letter for the first time in my pocket at Mainhill. Your gloves also (poor little gloves!) I found there: I have laid them by safely; you shall never get them till you *come and seek them* — if then! Such is the fate of simple maid!

On Thursday we split up our establishment here, and one division of us files away to Hoddam Hill. What a hurly-burly, what an anarchy and chaos! In less than forty days, the deluge will abate, however; and the first olive branch (of peace and health) will show itself above the mud. My literary proj-

¹ "How charming is divine Philosophy!" — "Comus," 476.

² Mr. Sherrieff, a Haddington neighbour.

ects are till then stationary, but not unfit for moving in a calmer time. Crabb Robinson has written to me ; I saw Sir W. Hamilton (apparently among the best men I have ever met in Edinburgh), and Dr. Irving introduced me to Dr. Julius (Yoolioos) of Hamburg, who almost embraced me as a father, because I had written a *Life of Schiller* and translated a novel of Goethe's. Julius is a man of letters ; as well as a Doctor, and a person of official dignity, being sent by his government to investigate the laws of quarantine, which our parliament now meditates altering. I regretted that my previous arrangements hindered me from seeing him above an hour ; but I liked him much, and he promised to write me his advice regarding these German books some time in Summer. So far all is well.

I had left my trunks at Moffat, and they did not come till two days after my arrival. Your little box I opened in the presence of many eager faces ; your gifts were snatched with *lauter Jubelgeschrei* [genuine jubilation] ; I question if ever gifts were welcomed with truer thanks or gave more happiness to the receivers. All stood amazed at the elegance of their "very grand" acquisitions, some praised in words the generous young *Leddy* who had sent them, little Jenny flourished her green bag "like an antique Mænad," and for the whole evening was observed to be *a wee carried*, even when the first blush of the business was over. My Mother was as proud (*purse-proud*) as any. She knows that you are coming, but she will tell no man of it, so you need not fear. Her warmest welcome as that of all and sundry waits you ; this in your eyes will make amends for *all* deficiencies. On the whole I think we shall be happy, and you must not *rue*.

Have you told your Mother? She surely will not put a veto on so fine and innocent a scheme. — Now judge if I have room to ask all the questions you must answer, asked or not? My Letter is a perfect *burble*; but if I cannot talk “*à tort et à travers* [at random] to *you*, to whom can I? Is your headache gone? For Heaven’s sake tell me that it is. Are you writing, — writing for *me*? Do you still love me? I have ceased to love you some time ago! — Your Evil Genius,

T. CARLYLE.

[*On the margins*]: I wrote to Mrs. Montagu the other day, and advised her to write to you, as to a young person of ethereal temper, for whom the Fates condemned me to entertain some foolish fondness. Mrs. Strachey is distracted with religion; I know not what to make of her.

Can you execute a commission for me, and will you? James Johnstone¹ the meek Pedagogue, of whom you have heard me speak, is returned from France, and wishes to exchange his present place of Tutor in a family at Broughty-ferry, for some permanent appointment in a school. Will you walk over any day to Grant’s Braes, and ask Gilbert Burns² if there *is* to be a Parish School in Haddington, and when and how, and send me word minutely when you write? I love this good simple man, and would gladly see him settled in a station, which he could fill with such profit to himself and others. This is a prosaic charge I give you: but

¹ Carlyle’s early friend, schoolmate, and correspondent.

² The poet’s brother. Gilbert Burns was at this time Factor of Lord Blantyre’s East Lothian Estates. He died at Grant’s Braes, 8th April, 1827.

for my sake and your love of goodness you will accomplish it. — God bless you my Dearest! You owe me a thousand kisses, but in *time* I will have payment of them all. — You must make my kindest compliments to your Mother; she shall not always dislike me. But, if possible, let the *Letters* be *your own*, as you propose: it is far better: whom have I but thee, whom hast thou but me? — Are the *beans* come up? How flourish Madame, and Mr. Tummas and his fair Helpmate? *Hope* also, and *Despair*? Tell me how the *Sanctum* is arranged, when you rise, and everything you do. Above all be good and love *me*.

LETTER 123

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 24 June, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — After two weeks of patient and two of impatient waiting, your Letter¹ at last arrived. It seems I ought to thank Providence rather than you for the favour; and indeed to me it makes little difference which. So long as Providence shall please to give you “several things which you cannot do without telling me,” I am perfectly content. For the rest, what use is there in telling you that I long for an answer? Do I tell my Mother that, generally speaking, in the forenoon of every lawful and unlawful² day, I desire to have some morsel of breakfast? She makes it for me, and there is an end.

¹ This Letter has been lost.

² The “unlawful day” was the Sabbath!

I rejoice to hear that you are busy, and constant in your business. The *theory* of happy living grows plainer to me every day: Let thought be turned to action, or dismissed entirely; there lies the whole secret: it is pity only that the *practice* should be so much harder than the demonstration! I can give myself and you the sagest rules of conduct: but for the fulfilment of them — alas! alas! — I expect that *Life*¹ of yours will do us both good: the advanced stage of its progress already rebukes me for my own inaction; and *when you arrive*, what a choice text will it be for long volumes of philosophy! What a sweet termination too! “On the — day of July, my beloved Mr. *Sansterre* was waiting for me in the lower district of Annandale; he had the audacity to clasp me in his arms, and kiss me, and here my *Life* came to a close!”

Your arrival in these parts promises to form a sort of epoch in our domestic history. All hands are waiting for you with a sentiment compounded of terror and delight. My Mother sends her kindest compliments, and says in various phraseology, that so long as you can tolerate her rude irregular *ménage*, she will be proud to have your company. My Father too expects you, I believe, with considerable impatience, and without any of the fear that overhangs the hearts of others. For him, he could open the wattled door of his wigwam, if he dwelt in one, and welcome with a serene spirit the monarch of Europe; or dismiss him as serenely if he thought that better. On the whole, however, this *royal visit* is anticipated as a great affair. I expect for my share, that notwithstanding all your practical philosophy, you *will* be considerably astonished at the

¹ Miss Welsh had begun to write her autobiography.

Hibernian aspect of things here; but as Laertes says, *was thut's* [what does it signify]?¹ You wish to see *man as he is*, I wish it also; so come and make the trial. If you can live contentedly on the resources of Repentance Hill, with no society but that of honest-hearted toilsome people, to whom rest is the highest recreation, you are far advanced in your domestic culture; you might live even at Craigenputtock for *two* months with an angel. If not, I will persuade you to stay till you have seen and understood; and then to think, with how very little means the human spirit may be kept in happiness and raised to its full moral stature.

When are those currants to be ready? I wish the sun would shine, and your Aunt bestir herself, and get them fairly *preserved*, and let you go. Your Mother was particularly kind to give her *permit* so readily; I think the arrangement of your journey is now much better than it was; nothing is wanted but the *execution*. You need not go so far as Annan; three coaches pass every evening within two miles of us: direct the guard to stop with you at Kelhead (three miles from Annan); Jack and I will be there with a pony saddled and bridled, and tea will be waiting for you here. I will show you Kirkconnell Churchyard, and Fair Helen's grave, if I can find it; I will take you to the top of Burnswark, and wander with you up and down the woods and lanes and moors, and talk of all things new and old. Earth, sea and air are open to us here as well as anywhere; the Water of Milk was flowing through its simple valley as early as the Brook Siloa, and poor Repentance

¹ "Laertes' customary *was thut's*." — "Meister's Apprenticeship," Bk. iv., ch. x.

Hill is as old as Caucasus itself. There is a majesty and mystery in Nature, take her as you will; the essence of all poetry comes breathing to a mind that feels, from every province of her empire. Is she not immoveable, eternal, and immense, in Annandale as she is in Chamouni? The chambers of the East are opened in every land, and the Sun comes forth to sow the Earth with Orient pearl; Night, the ancient Mother, follows him with her diadem of stars; and Arcturus and Orion call *me* into the infinitudes of space as they called the Druid Priest or the Shepherd of Chaldea. Bright creatures! How they gleam like spirits, thro' the shadows of innumerable ages, from their thrones in the boundless depths of heaven!

“Who ever gazed upon them shining,
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?”¹

—*I* have, twenty times; tho' now and then also I have *not*. Would *you* go with me? Come, and let us consult. In plain prose, we shall have peace and quietness here, and if our minds can amuse *themselves*, well and good; if they cannot, they may even go unamused.

I must not terminate this valuable sheet (excuse the beautiful stamped border, for in truth I had no other) without sending you a paragraph about myself, and my specific occupations. Happily, the whole may be summed up in little compass. For myself, I am gradually and steadily gathering health;

¹ “The Siege of Corinth” (Byron) ll. 203–6. Carlyle cites from memory with some inaccuracies, which I have corrected. Mr. Froude's version (“Life,” i. 299) is neither Byron's nor Carlyle's.

and for my occupations, they amount to *zero*. It is many a weary year since I have been so idle or so happy. I have not done two sheets of *Werter*¹ yet; I read Richter and Jacobi, I ride, and hoe cabbages, and, like Basil Montagu am “a lover of all quiet things.” Sometimes something in the shape of conscience says to me: “You will please to observe, Mr. Tummas, that time is flying fast away, and you are very poor and ignorant and unknown, and verging towards nine-and-twenty.² What is to become of you in the long run, Mr. Tummas? Are you not partly of the opinion that you are — an ass? The world is running past you, you are out of the battle altogether, my pretty Sir; no promotion, knowledge, money, glory” — To which I usually answer: “And what the D[evil] is the matter? What have knowledge, money, glory done for me hitherto? Could they quench the burning of my soul, or get me one hour of deep rest? Time, you say, is flying: to how many mortals have you seen this same Time yield any portion of contentment and dignity? How much has it yielded me? Let it fly, twice as fast, if it like!” — On the whole, however, I hope this humour will not be my final one. It is rather a sort of *Holy Truce*, a *Pax Dei* which exhausted Nature has conquered for herself from all the fiends that assaulted and beset her; as her strength returns, the battle will again commence. Yet, never, I trust, with such fateful eagerness as of old! I see the arena of Life lying round me, desolate and

¹ “Sorrows of Werter,” by Goethe, which Carlyle at one time thought of including in his “German Romance.”

² Carlyle was now over twenty-nine, having been born on the 4th of December, 1795.

quiet as the ashes of Mount Ætna; flowers and verdure will again spring over its surface, but I know that *fire* is still beneath it, and that it or I have no foundation or endurance. O human life! O soul of man! — But my paper is concluded.

I am glad that you have answered Mrs. Montagu, and liked her. She labours under some delusion, I believe, about your secret history, but she has skill to manage anything. I have had a Letter from her, full of eloquence, in which she tells me that “your heart is in England your heart is not here.”¹ This is the “romance of real life.” She lays down in distinct and minute language the duties that *my* most enviable wife will have to engage with; that also is romance; but you shall see it when you come. On the whole, she *is* a noble woman, after making all allowances. In the midst of all that rhetoric, there is sincerity and goodness and highmindedness enough to furnish fifty ordinary women. I must write to her again. Mrs. Strachey is in my debt. To Edward Irving, I have not written a syllable! Tomorrow, I purpose it; for I am very wrong in this case. — When will *you* write? What more can I say, except that “I would gladly give my life for thee, who wouldst

¹ Mrs. Montagu’s Letter is dated 30th May, 1825. In it she says: “In writing to Miss Welsh I have had a task of considerable difficulty. ‘Her heart is in England, her heart is not there,’ and I feared to be the means of stirring an old flame. . . . If Miss Welsh were to pass one week with me, she might be satisfied that to be Mr. Irving’s wife would (to a spirit of her tone) be entire and unmixed misery: they are not the least fitted to each other. . . . Come back to us, when you are well, for with all our faults we are not undeserving of you entirely.” . . .

For some remarks on the subject of Edward Irving and Miss Welsh, see Appendix B, Note Three.

gladly have given thine for me, withal"!¹ — God bless you, my own Jane! Write, and come.

I am ever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

Take my best thanks for your attention to poor Johnstone's affair; I have written to him, and think the place may suit him; it is possible he may come and see Mr. Burns in person. — The missing volume of your *Molière* is here. Come and fetch it. —

Jean is not here; Mary has detained her at Mainhill for the sake of having company to school. Jack sends his best compliments: he sits in a little room, reading Medicine and Poetry and History, from the rising to the setting sun, and chopping logic with all men, women and children. — Is your head well, is your *Life* nearly *done* (Heaven forbid!)? — Write soon, and tell me all, all.

LETTER 124

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, 3rd July, '1825.'

MY ADORABLE MR. THOMAS, — I will *schreiben* instantly since you are wearying, tho' I doubt if you will thank me for it, as I am in the dullest of all possible moods.

While you have been arguing the good-for-nothingness of knowledge, money, glory — and love

¹ The quotation seems to be a translation or imitation of a sentence in "Atala" ("The Huntsmen") where Châteaubriand, describing Atala's rescue of her lover, the son of Outalissi, from torture by the Indians, makes her exclaim: "*J'ai dû hasarder ma vie pour vous, puisque vous aviez donné la votre pour moi.*"

too no doubt — a danger has passed over your unconscious head, which might well have given a more sombre hue to your speculations, — nothing less than the cutting short of both my lives at once. I can hardly say what has ailed me; but for these last three weeks I have been in the most uncomfortable plight. I gave over sleeping, and then gave over eating, while my head ached in an unmerciful manner day and night. All this with the help of drugs and hot baths made me so very weak that I could not walk twenty yards. Be comforted, however; for I am fast recovering, and expect to set out for Dumfriesshire in about a fortnight. Then! My heart beats faster than usual when I think of walking into the midst of your Family. But I *will* come, if I am alive. I think I should be quite well if I was beside you again. Surely the Fates are against my purposes! Let me be ever so studiously disposed, I get nothing accomplished. Will it be always thus? If I thought so, I would say my prayers and hang myself without more ado. But when we get this delightful House in the Country, and “all things fit around us like the wheels in an eight-day clock,”¹ I flatter myself that I shall have no more headaches; no more vexatious interruptions; that I shall have health and quietness to study all things under the sun, and to imitate Theresa² “in her imitable points,” besides. In the meantime, Dearest, will you please to recollect that two hundred a-year is not to be gained by hoeing cabbages; that it would scarce be advisable to set up house-keeping on less; and that I am heartily sick of my existence in this miserable Haddington.

¹ Quoted from Carlyle's Letter of 12th Aug., 1824, No. 100.

² Of “Wilhelm Meister.”

What a cold lover you are that need to be reminded of this! and what must I be that *deign* to remind you of it? A little delirious perhaps from my recent illness.

Is it not very provoking to see Fortune lavishing her favours on fools while she is such a niggard to you and I [*sic*]? In returning from Haddington to Gartmore, the other day, Margaret B—— lighted on a Husband as rich as Cræsus. They travelled a dozen miles together in some coach; he offered her himself and his fortune, four-and-twenty hours after, and to-morrow is their wedding-day. This is “free-masonry of souls” with a vengeance! I do not envy Margaret her Glasgow Merchant; but I do think his money would have been better bestowed on *my* Philosopher. What do you think?

I am very curious to see Mrs. Montagu’s catalogue of duties; so take care that you do not light your pipe with the Letter. I have heard from the “noble lady” again, and written again. She will surely be satisfied *now* that there is no worm of disappointment preying on my “damask cheek”;¹ for I have told her in luminous English that my heart is *not* in England, but in Annandale. An odd communication you will say to be contained in my *second* Letter. I do not know how it was, but I could not resist the ultra-German impulse to make a confidant of this new friend whom I have not seen. I already feel an affection for her which I cannot express: she is so frank and kind and high-souled; so superior to all the women I have known. It is to be wished,

¹ “ . . . she never told her love;
But let concealment, like a worm i’ the bud,
Feed on her damask cheek.”

“Twelfth Night,” Act ii. sc. 4.

however, that she would not flatter at such a rate. She makes such a heavenly creature of me in her last Letter, that if I had not viewed myself too often in the mirror of truth to credit her representation, I should be apt to commit the folly of Narcissus and die of self-love.

My *Life* is lying quietly in the "Sanctum," as also *Modern Europe* and the *Thirty-Years War*.¹ I do nothing on the face of the earth at present, but recline on a sofa and read Novels, or drive about the Country in a gig. This is my Mother's prescription; and I am obliged to submit for peace's sake. — I must conclude; for I am tired, and I am sure I have tired you also. Better, however, that you should think me stupid than forgetful of you. God bless you, Darling. I will try to write longer and better at another time. Meanwhile do you write, and comfort me for this interruption. I think in a month or six weeks, I shall have the kiss which you make such a work about. My kindest regards to your Mother and John. I wish he could light on some recipe in his Medical Books to cure my vexatious headache.

Ever, ever yours,

J. B. W.

LETTER 125

T. Carlyle, to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, Monday, '4 July, 1825.'

MEINE LIEBE, — Tho' it is not yet above a week since the utmost speed of postage could have brought

¹ Schiller's, which Carlyle had given her when he was last in Edinburgh.

me your Letter,¹ I have begun to long for it with no little eagerness. You will forgive this supernumerary Letter; and look upon it as the record of my anxieties, if it do not prove the means of removing them. I would not force you to write to me before your time, altho' I could. A Letter from you is like a little rose in the garden of love: we must wait with patience till the Sun and the dew have unclosed the bud and sent forth the leaves; not pluck it unripened, and mock the promise of its blushing fragrance. After all, why should I feel so anxious about your decision? Do I not know that you *are* coming? Have you not told me so, "unless I *rue*?" And how can I *rue*? *Gewiss, sie kommt!* [For certain she is coming!]

I might insult your love of me, and awaken doubts about what is not doubtful, if I made any more apologies about the rudeness, insufficiency, and so forth, of the accommodation you are like to meet with. Is it not my own vanity rather than my wish for your happiness that would prompt me to dilate on that "head of matters"? Forsooth the Philosopher is afraid lest his chosen Darling should find out that he is not rich enough, or of rich enough extraction; that he is in fact a sort of clod-hopper, and unworthy the attention not to say affection of one like her! Poor Philosopher! he were but a young apprentice to the trade, if *these* things moved him. Or do I know so little of you as to think that pomp and circumstance are essential to your comfort, that kindness and affection might not make amends for every want? Come, then, come my Darling; if you have the heart to venture, I predict that you will not re-

¹ When writing this Carlyle had not received Miss Welsh's of the 3d of July.

pent. My Mother amuses me when she speaks of you; the other day she said: "I ken how it 'll be; she'll just feel as I would do if I were gaun to live wi' Peter Paddy's folk (Peter is a Tipperary band-box-maker late of this district, now alas! *sub umbris*); but if she want to see *thee*, she 'll no care!" Consider therefore if you want to see me (a sight for sore eyes, truly!), and come accordingly.

Alick has bought you a little Irish pony at Keltonhill fair; it is of a dark chestnut colour, and kicks occasionally. Nevertheless I will make it carry you beside me, at a gentle amble, thro' all these moors and lanes; and we shall see the rugged face of old Annandale, and talk of all things under the sun. How many *quarrels* do you think will serve us? One *per diem*? Alas! that human souls have so much of the Devil in them! How could I find in my heart to say one cruel word to you? Or why should those kind black eyes ever look on me with any other aspect than the melting light of love? Richter says: "The man should overcome by tenderness, the woman by reason"; but this is only in the "married state"; in the single state, I know not how he manages, I suppose there is nothing for it but to *kiss and be agreed*. By and by, it may be, we shall learn. O that we had learned, and had room to practise it! that we belonged to one another, that we lived with each other wholly, in that trustful sympathy, that oneness of souls that is the choicest gift of Heaven to mortals! My Dearest! I believe in truth "my heart has still some foolish fondness for thee": I do love thee in the secret of my spirit, it will be long before I cease to love thee. Would that I could show it, that it might reward and animate me in suitable *activity*,

not lie choked and mouldering in the labyrinthic depths of *speculation*! Poor miserable sons of Adam! There is a spark of heavenly fire within us, an ethereal glow of Love and Wisdom, for it was the breath of God that made us living souls; but we are formed of the dust of the ground, and our lot is cast on Earth, and the fire lies hid among the ashes of our fortune, or burns with a fitful twinkle, which Chance not we can foster. It makes me sad to think how very small a part we are of what we might be; how men struggle with the great trade-winds of Life, and are borne below the haven by squalls and currents which they knew not of; how they toil and strain, and are again deceived; and how at last tired nature casts away the helm, and leaves the bark to float at random, careless to what unknown rock or shore the gloomy tide may bear it. Will affection also die at last in that inhospitable scene? Will the excellent become to us no better than the common, and the Spirit of the Universe with his thousand voices speak to us in vain? Alas! must the heart itself grow dull and callous, as its hopes one after the other shrink and wither? "*Armseliger Faust, ich kenne dich nicht mehr!*" [Poor Faust, I know thee no more!]

You perceive my preaching faculty is not a whit diminished, had I opportunity to give it scope. This place in fact is favourable for it: I have no business to accomplish, but a problem of which Experience and John Badams have already given me all the rules and limits; I only sleep eight hours of the four-and-twenty, and I see no living creature that abstracts me from my visions. No wonder, then, that I take "general views." Sometimes unluckily they become particular enough, notwithstanding

ing. It would edify you, for example, could you listen to one of the *auricular confessions* which I hold with the man-within some morning before getting out of bed. What blessed anthems that gentlemen does chaunt to me! With what emphasis he calls me fool, ass, blockhead; with what felicity he likens me to the armadillo of the Tropics, a horn-cased pug of a creature that climbs some tree, and will not budge a step from it, till it has eaten every leaf and twig and even every shred of bark! I tell him that I must and will be healthy tho' the Devil were in it; that he had better hold his tongue, that there is no use in talking — and then spring out, and huddle on my raiment, and gallop round by Dalton, and so put him to silence, at least to low grumbling. On the whole, I feel well that this is no scene for the healthy Philosopher whatever it may be for the sick. If ever I get well, I must leave it, and shall wish to leave it. For the present, every time I think of London and Edinburgh, I feel as if in heaven.

Considering all this, I wonder many a time that *you* have not cut me off from all part or lot in you. How in the name of wonder *dare* you think of marrying me? Was it the serious purpose of your reason, or only the day-dream of your fancy? Or do you *love* me, and feel that you could brave any fortune along with me? If so, my own Darling! — But how have I deserved it? Surely there is not such faith, in the breast of another “young lady” in this country. You are richer than I in soul as well as in fortune; you have a belief in the omnipotence of affection, which I for some years have partly lost. God bless you, my little Jane! — Let us study not to wreck a prospect that has in it

so much of Heaven, however clogged and cumbered by the clay of Earth. I have still some faint idea that you will *rue*, when you have seen me here : at times in bitter moments, I smite my foot against the ground, and swear that it were best ! Oh, how many thousands of things have we to ask and learn, when you come !

Now, you will come for certain ; and write to me very soon to that effect ? be serious ; do not laugh at me, if you can help it ; there is something in laughter that dries up all the channels of the heart : you are pretty (*pooty*) when you mock, you are heavenly when you love and weep. Will you attend to this caution ? Not a jot !

My Mother does not know that I am writing to you, or her “kindest compliments” would form a portion of my Letter. She is far from well in health, and has not like me the hope of ever recovering it. *Her* country is on the other side of the Stars ! I were a Turk, if I did not love her. — Jane was here the other night ; she is sewing *Samplers*, stitching-in names and robin-red-breasts and all sorts of mosaic needlework. Among a crowd of vulgar initials, I asked her what the “J. W.” meant ? Who was he ? She paused ; then with a look of timorous archness, answered : “It’s no a *he* ava’ !” — You will write ? But I am a fool to hurry you. *A Dieu*, my Dearest ! I am wholly yours.

T. CARLYLE.

Take this Newspaper, come at any rate : except as a memorial of me, I fear it is not worth the half-penny it costs you. I looked for an *Examiner* instead.

LETTER 126

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, 19th July, '1825.'

MY DEAR LOVE, — What a miser you are of your Letters, to charge the last to my account, after making a show of giving it into the bargain! *Eh bien!* I have nothing for it but to submit in this as in all things else: "my whole will," Mrs. Montagu says, "must be thrown into *fusion*, and cast according to another mould." A barbarous process, really! I wonder that the bare mention of it did not terrify me into the resolution of remaining single all the days of my life.

A few hurried lines, however, are all that I *can* bestow on you at present, being in the middle of confusion and "troubled about many things." Tomorrow, with the blessing of God, we go to Edinburgh; on Saturday to Dumfriesshire, and not an article of my wardrobe is packed yet. To add to my hurry, I have just got a Letter from the *ci-devant* Margaret B—— which requires an immediate answer, as it concerns the important matter of cambric handkerchiefs. — It cannot be long now until we meet — meet! O that it were never more to — quarrel! I wish however that the weather were a little cooler, and my health a little stronger first. I am better, greatly better than I was, but still "silly" as the people here call it; but the frisking pony and the sight of thee will put me all to rights again, I expect.

I am just returned from a visit (you would never

guess where),— at Phantassie ! This is the first fruits of my *Life* ; it revived a number of recollections in me which softened my heart towards these Rennies ; so that when I met some of them one day by chance, I made steps towards a reconciliation, which were met more than half way. We are now on the best possible terms. I am glad of it ; for there are few kinds of suffering which I would not endure sooner than estrangement from those I love ; and it is impossible for me ever to feel altogether indifferent to the friendships which I contracted with the trustful, sanguine enthusiasm of sixteen.

My money matters are all arranged ; and now I am as poor as yourself.¹ Do you like me the worse

¹ In January, 1824, Mr. Donaldson (Mrs. Welsh's family lawyer), hearing that Miss Welsh was seriously ill, took it upon himself to write and warn her that in case of her dying intestate, Mrs. Welsh's right to her daughter's estate would likely be disputed. His Letter has not been preserved, but Miss Welsh's reply to it is as follows: "Edinburgh, 23rd January, 1824.— My dear Sir,— I feel very grateful to you for putting me in mind of a duty which I have neglected hitherto solely from ignorance of its importance. Until your Letter was put into my hands, I was not in the least aware that in the event of my death, my Mother's *natural* rights to my inheritance could possibly be disputed. Otherwise common-sense and natural affection would doubtless have instructed me to anticipate your friendly counsel. Now that I *am* aware that such a possibility *does* exist, I shall not feel comfortable in my mind as long as it is not effectually provided against."—Accordingly a provisional "Settlement" was prepared by Mr. Donaldson, and executed by Miss Welsh on the 30th of January, 1824. Next year she made her will leaving Craigenputtock in fee-simple to Carlyle, and at the same time, urged thereto by Carlyle himself, she executed a "Disposition and Assignation," making over to her mother the Haddington House and the life-rent of Craigenputtock. The date of this latter instrument is 19th July, 1825. On the same day in presenting it to her mother, she wrote : "I promised to Mr. Carlyle, when he was last here, that before we met again, he

that I am poor? Not you indeed! And for me, I would give thousands a-year instead of hundreds to buy the conviction of being loved for myself alone. Mr. Donaldson has seen my *Will* too, with your name written in it in great letters. No matter! Why should I be ashamed of showing an affection which I am not ashamed to feel? But we will talk over all these things when we meet. — It will take all your indulgence to excuse this breathless Letter. — God bless you, my Darling! I am yours ever and wholly,

JANE BAILLIE PEN WELSH.

I had *two* sheets from Mrs. Montagu, the other day, trying to prove that I knew nothing at all of my own heart! Mercy! how romantic she is! — Write presently to Templand.

LETTER 127

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

TEMPLAND, Sunday, '24 July, 1825.'

MY DEAREST, — I thought to write to you from this place with joy; I write with shame and tears. The enclosed Letter,¹ which I found lying for me, has distracted my thoughts from the prospect of our meeting, the brightest in my mind for many

should be delivered from the thought of loving an Heiress, a thought which is actually *painful* to his proud and generous nature." — See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 3.

¹ The enclosure was from Mrs. Montagu; it is undated but postmarked "20th July, 1825." The version which follows this Letter gives Mrs. Montagu's meaning as accurately as possible.

months, and forced them on a part of my own conduct which makes me unworthy ever to see you again, or to be clasped to your true heart again. I cannot come to you, cannot be at peace with myself, till I have made the confession which Mrs. Montagu so impressively shows me the need of.

Let me tell it then at once. I have deceived you, — *I* whose truth and frankness you have so often praised, have deceived my bosom friend! I told you that I did not care for Edward Irving; took pains to make you believe this. It was false: I loved him — must I say it — *once* passionately loved him. Would to Heaven that this were all! it might not perhaps lower me much in your opinion; for he is no unworthy man. And if I showed weakness in loving one whom I knew to be engaged to another, I made amends in persuading him to marry that other and preserve his honour from reproach. But I have concealed and disguised the truth; and for this I have no excuse; none, at least, that would bear a moment's scrutiny. Woe to me then, if your reason be my judge and not your love! I cannot even plead the merit of a *voluntary* disclosure as a claim to your forgiveness. I make it because I *must*, because this extraordinary woman has moved me to honesty whether I would or no. Read her Letter, and judge if it was possible for me to resist it.

Write, I beseech you, instantly and let me know my fate. This suspense is worse to endure than any certainty. Say, if you *can*, that I may come to you, that you will take me to your heart after all as your own, your trusted Jane, and I will arrange it as soon as ever I am able; say no, that you no longer wish to see me, that my image is defaced in

your soul, and I will think you *not unjust*. Oh that I had your answer! Never were you so dear as at this moment when I am in danger of losing your affection, or what is still more precious to me, your respect.

JANE B. WELSH.

[*On the cover, in Miss Welsh's hand:*] "One enclosure only." Beneath which words Carlyle has written, in his later handwriting (*circa* 1869):

"Some of Mrs. Montagu's *nonsense* (Pff!)."

Mrs. Montagu to Miss Jane Welsh

25, BEDFORD SQUARE, LONDON.

[Post-marked 20 July, 1825.]

MY DEAR MISS WELSH, — There is now before me on my table a beautiful green Mandarin Bason, a Greek Tazza could not exceed its elegant proportions, and its scarcity only seems to increase every person's opinion of its value. — It is to me *valueless*; it will not endure, or hold; hot or cold water would prove its worthlessness. It no longer rings responsive to my touch; for notwithstanding its elegance and beauty, *it has a flaw in it*. And this illustrates my feeling, of the truth, entireness, and integrity of friendship. — Shall such a flaw be found in my dear Jane Welsh? Shall she stop half-way in nobleness and sincerity? Shall she be allowed to "keek with critical dissection" into another heart laid at her feet, and shall she shut up the inner recesses of her own from one whom she professes to love and live for? No, my dear young Lady, the past as well as the present must be laid open; there must be no Bluebeard's closet in which the skeleton may one day be discovered. You have received a new and a dear guest to occupy your heart, not as tenant at will,

but as tenant for life ; and if, with a noble show of friendship, you have still only a show of it, what conclusion will that “soul of fire” arrive at? The wisdom that was before all time hath said, “Perfect love casteth out fear” ; and till your fears are all cast out, your love is still imperfect and your cure incomplete. I could say much to you of the *policy* of a perfect integrity, but I scorn that base and grovelling word. — You will think how easy it is to sit and dictate? Believe me, my love, I owe many peaceful days and nights to a similar disclosure, poured into the ear of a passionate and jealous man ; a disclosure most painful, most humiliating, — the particulars I will one day communicate to you. If this confession had not been made, how terrible would the evils have been, to which I might have been exposed ; and how could I have hoped to regain confidence, of which I should in that case have felt myself wholly undeserving? *Pride* is a paltry thing : it is an inflation that only proves emptiness, — which Folly paints with the colours of the prism, but which fades to its original nothingness under the eye of Reason! *You* must stoop before you can be proud. Oh! wear not the livery of fools whom you despise : in them it is excusable, but not in you.

You see, my dear friend, what a terrible monitor you will find in me. The poor monk who puts on voluntarily a hair shirt, will be but the type and shadow of your patient endurance, — if you do endure me, — and you must learn to do so ; for your wit will not over-awe me, or your loveliness bribe me. I shall be the only friend you have out of the circle of your spells.

Mr. Irving is here again ; his Wife and Child are with her friends ; and he has resumed his old place and his old feelings. I perceive the strength of his sympathy, and the strength of the social part of his nature, which is in perfect harmony with the feelings of the persons who are around him. He is very much beloved here. Mr. Montagu (whom you would delight in) loves him entirely like a favoured son. He is now staying under our roof, where I so often entreated

Mr. Carlyle to stay. We would have exorcised the bitter spirit that rends him, and have cast it out forever. You will do this much more readily. I have a married daughter, the Wife of Mr. Procter, better known to you as "Barry Cornwall." I think she will be *confined* about September, and that will keep me late in Town. If it should be otherwise, if I should be able to make out a journey to Bolton Abbey (near Harrogate), could you join me there? It is not more than seventy miles from the Lakes, and would be a step from Dumfriesshire. — Will you see my dear young friend, whom I have never seen, Miss Craik of Arbigland? the daughter of a woman whom I loved from her earliest infancy to the day of her sudden death, three years since? And will you see my dear Boy, Charles Montagu, with Dr. Duncan at Ruthwell? I know not where Templand is, though I have seen much of Dumfriesshire, and much of the Town of Dumfries in company of my dear Robert Burns, who used to take me into the silent streets, where, to use his own words, "we were free of the *Red-coats* who haunted my steps." For so he most familiarly abused the important personages who made my Balls happy. Will you come to Bolton? And when you are safe under my protection, will Mr. Carlyle come too? "He hears me not, he minds me not"; but he will answer and mind you.

Your attached friend,

D. B. MONTAGU.

LETTER 128

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

HODDAM HILL, 29th July, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — Your Letter reached me but a few hours ago: I was doubly shocked on reading it a second time to find it dated *Sunday*. What a week

you must have had ! It were inhuman to keep you another moment in uncertainty.

You exaggerate this matter greatly : it is an evil, but it may be borne ; we must bear it *together* ; what else can we do ? Much of the annoyance it occasions to me proceeds from selfish sources, of a poor enough description ; this is unworthy of our notice. Let it go to strengthen the schoolings of experience, let it be another chastisement to Vanity : perhaps she needs it ; and if not, who is *She* that I should take thought of her ?

Nor is the other, more serious part of the mischief half so heinous in my eyes as it seems to be in yours. There was a want of firmness in withholding an avowal which you thought might give me pain, there must have been much suffering in the concealments and reservations it imposed on you : but there is a heroism in your present frankness, a fund of truth and probity, which ought to cancel all that went before. You say it was not voluntary : so much the more difficult ; I honour it the more. You ask me to *forgive* you, you stand humbled and weeping before me. No more of this, for God's sake ! Forgiveness ! Where is the living man that dare look steadfastly into his " painted sepulchre " of a heart, and say : " I have lived one year without committing fifty faults of a deeper dye than this ? " My dear Jane ! My best Jane ! Your soul is of a more ethereal temper than befits this very despicable world. You love truth and nobleness, you are forced to love them ; and you know not how they may be reached. O God ! What a heartless slave were I, if I discouraged you, for any paltry momentary interests of my own, in the sacred object you are aiming at ! Believe me, my Dearest, this strug-

gling of a pure soul to escape from the contaminations that encircle it, is but the more touching to me that its success is incomplete. It is human nature in the loveliest aspect our poor Earth admits of; flesh and spirit, the clay of the ground made living by the breath of the Almighty.

O love truth, my Dearest, prize it beyond all fame and power and happiness! Continue to love it fearlessly, thro' good and bad report: it is the day-star from on high that shines to us in this gloomy wilderness of existence; there is still hope of him who knows and venerates its light, and dare determine to hold fast by it to the death. Help me too to love it: I can talk more largely of it than you; but many an hour I could say with Brutus: "Virtue, have I worshipped thee as a substance, and found thee an empty shadow?" It *is* not so! By the majestic Universe, by the mysterious Soul of Man, it is not so! There is a worth in goodness which defies all chance. The happy man was never yet created; the *virtuous* man, tho' clothed in rags and sinking under pain, *is* the jewel of the Earth, however I may doubt it, or deny it in my bitterness of heart. O never let me forget it! Teach me, tell me, when the Fiend of Suffering, and the base Spirit of the world are ready to prevail against me, and drive me from this last stronghold!

You feel grateful to me that I have "forgiven" you? You thank me, and say I treat you generously? Alas, alas! I deserve no gratitude. What have I done? Assured you that my affection is still yours, that you are even dearer to me for this painful circumstance. But do you know the worth of that affection? Have you ever seen *me* and my

condition in the naked eye of your reason? You have not: you do not know me. . . . What is my love of you or of any one? A wild peal through the desolate chambers of my soul, forcing perhaps a bitter tear into my eyes, and then giving place to silence and death? You know me not; no living mortal knows me, — seems to know me. My heart has been steeped in solitary bitterness, till the life of it is gone: the heaven of two confiding souls that live but for each other encircled with glad affection, enlightened by the sun of worldly blessings and suitable activity, is a thing that I contemplate from a far distance, without the hope, sometimes even without the wish, of reaching it. Am I not poor and sick and helpless and estranged from all men? I lie upon the thorny couch of pain, my pillow is the iron pillow of despair: I can rest on them in silence, but that is all that I can do. Think of it, Jane! I can never make you happy. Leave me, then!¹ Why should I destroy you? It is but one bold step and it is done. We shall suffer, suffer to the heart; but we shall have obeyed the voice of reason, and time will teach us to endure it. *Verschmerzen werden wirs; denn was verschmerzte nicht der*

¹ Carlyle's biographer, seeming to cite from this Letter, says ("Life," i. 307): "His infirmities, mental and bodily, might make him an unfit companion for her or indeed for any woman." The words "or indeed for any woman" are a pure—or rather an impure—invention of the biographer. There is nothing the least like them in this or in any other of Carlyle's Letters. Miss Welsh has just confessed that she had "once passionately loved" Irving, and Carlyle replies, not unnaturally under the circumstances, "I can never make you happy. Leave me, then," — a very different thing from saying that he could never be a fit companion for *any* woman! Carlyle's only "bodily infirmity" was dyspepsia; he was never afflicted with any "mental infirmity"!

*Mensch?*¹ [We shall endure the smart of it; for what sorrow is there in man that will not finally fret itself to sleep?] No affection is unalterable or eternal: we ourselves with all our passions sink to death, and are speedily consumed.

I know your generous heart: you say I will not leave this poor true-hearted brother, he *is* my brother and faithful to me tho' sinking in the waves of destiny; I will clasp him to my heart, and save him or perish with him! Alas! you know not what you do: you cannot save me; it is Fate only that can save me, if I am to be saved at all. . . . I smile to hear the recipe of Mrs. Montagu. Exorcism! with a vengeance! *Ach du lieber Gott!*

These things have long, for years more or less distinctly, lain upon my heart, and I have told you them, that I might imitate the sincerity you have so nobly set before me as a pattern. If you say they are "blue devils," vapours of sickness, I shall be sorry; for it will but show me that you have not understood or believed: if you think them merely the weak querulous wailings of a distempered mind, you will do me some injustice: if you think they are pretexts and that I have ceased to love you, you will do injustice both to yourself and me. O Jane! — But what use is it to talk? I could write forty quires on the subject, and yet not make it clear to you. You are young, you know not life, know not yourself. Secluded all your days from the native country of your spirit, you have grasped at every semblance of it: first the rude smoky fire of Edward Irving seemed to you a star of heaven; next the quivering *ignis fatuus* of a soul that dwells in me!

¹ Cf. Schiller's "Wallenstein," Act v. sc. iii. — The translation of the last clause of the above sentence is Dr. F. Flügel's.

The world has a thousand noble hearts in it, that you do not dream of; and you think that you will never meet another. What am I, or what is my father's house, that you should sacrifice yourself for me? ¹

I know not whether it was good to write these things, for a spoken word is more dangerous than a whetted sword. They assume a thousand forms in my thoughts: this, as near as I could paint it, is a glimpse of their general aspect. At least, therefore, they are true; they seem to demand *your* solemn calm deliberation, and the speedier the decision it may be the better for us both. Again and again I repeat it, you do not know me! Come and see, and determine. Let me hear you, and do you hear me. As I *am*, take me or refuse me: but not as I *am not*; for *this* will not and cannot come to good. God help us both, and show us both the way we ought to walk in! When will you be here? Write twice? Once pointing out the week, again appointing the day. Bid the coach leave you at Kelhead Kilns at the end of the road for Hoddam Bridge; I will be in waiting; tell me which coach you come by, for three pass every evening. All are impatient for you here: I for many reasons. When will you come? You are forever dear to me, in spite of all I say and feel.

God bless you my Darling! I am always and wholly yours,

T. CARLYLE.

¹ "To sacrifice myself," used in reference to marriage, is Miss Welsh's own phrase. — See *ante*, Letter 47.

LETTER 129

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

TEMPLAND Saturday, '30 July, 1825.'

MR. CARLYLE, do you mean to kill me?¹ Is it just of you to keep me so long in doubt? Your displeasure I have merited, perhaps your scorn, but surely not this terrible silence! Write then, for Heaven's sake! and kindly, if you can; for I am wretched beyond all expression. Had I but strength, I would come to you this very day; and when I held you in my arms, and you saw my tears, you would forget everything but the love I bear you. O, I do love you, my own Friend, above the whole Earth: no human being was ever half so dear to me, — none, none: and will you break my heart? Alas! I thought when we parted that some evil destiny was hanging over us; but the loss of your affection was the very last thing I feared. And have I indeed lost it? Speak, tell me. It is inhuman to leave me in this suspense. Be your answer what it may, I will love and venerate you to the last. You may be no longer mine, but I will be yours in life, in death, through all Eternity.

JANE B. WELSH.

¹ Carlyle's Letter of the 29th had not reached Miss Welsh's hands when she wrote the above.

LETTER 130

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

HODDAM HILL, 10th August, 1825.

MY DEAREST LITTLE RUTH!¹ — I owe you many thanks for your kindness of heart, for your true unflinching love of me, unworthy as I am “by destiny or by my own deserving” of such bounties.² Your faith in me is great, greater than I ever can fulfil, or pay with due gratitude. So we are *not* to part! O my Darling, how could we ever part? Do we not love each other? Does not your fervid trembling spirit cleave to mine as to its pillar of hope in the darkness and tempests of life? Are not my arms about you, is not my breast your pillow? If you love me with the whole strength of that noble heart, it *were* unwise in you to leave me. No, we will never part, betide what may!

In truth, I believe, I should not be so generous with my offers to that effect, were it not for some secret persuasion that they had little chance to be accepted. I feel as if there were no sacrifice which I could not make to see, still more to cause, your happiness; but sacrifices in idea, and sacrifices in deed are different matters; and this would in truth be a sacrifice of almost all that still binds me to the world by any tie of hope, that still tinges my sky

¹ “And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” — “Ruth,” i. 16.

² Miss Welsh’s reply to Carlyle’s last Letter has been lost.

with a streak of dawn amid the gloom that over-shadows me. Who knows, too, but we may still be happy? In calm hours, hope has not yet forsaken me; for we are still in the land of the living which is the place of hope, and more perverse destinies than ours have changed to smoothness and serenity. The evil is deep and dark, but it is *one*, and I see it clearly. If this accursed burden of disease were cast away, nine-tenths of my faults and incapacities would pass away with it. Life might still lie round me like a huge quarry; but I should have my strength to labour in it, and form its shapeless masses into an edifice. Nay, perhaps, this same deathlike cold eclipse under which my youth has passed away in heaviness and woe, might not be without its uses in my future fortunes, tho' I have stormed at it as the blackest most unmingled curse with which the wrath of Heaven could have visited me. "Ye shall become perfect thro' sufferings," says the Scripture, and Experience is beginning to show me the truth of the maxim. Thou, too, my Darling, hast thy share! Repine not at it, Jane; it is the lot of all mortals; the curse of fools, but sometimes also the blessing of the wise. How wild are our wishes, how frantic our schemes of happiness when we first enter on the world! Our hearts encircled in the delusions of vanity and self-love, we think the Universe was made for us alone; we glory in the strength of our gifts, in the pride of our place; and forget that the fairest ornament of our being is "the quality of mercy," the still, meek, humble Love that dwells in the inmost shrine of our nature, and cannot come to light till Selfishness in all its cunning forms is banished out of us, till affliction and neglect and disappointment have sternly taught

us that self is a foundation of sand, that we, even the mighty *we*, are a poor and feeble and most unimportant fraction in the general sum of existence. Fools writhe and wriggle and rebel at this ; their life is a little waspish battle against all mankind for refusing to take part with them ; and their little dole of reputation and sensation, wasting more and more into a shred, is annihilated at the end of a few beggarly years, and they leave the Earth without ever feeling that the spirit of man is a child of Heaven, and has thoughts and aims in which self and its interests are lost from the eye, as the Eagle is swallowed up in the brightness of the sun, to which it soars. Let *us* be wise, let us admit this painful but medicinal conviction, and meekly learn the lesson which it teaches us. O Jane ! Why should we murmur ? Are we not rich in better things than silver or gold, or the vain babble of stupid men ? We have found each other, and our hearts are one, our beings are one ; for we love each other with a love not grounded on deception but on *truth*, and no force can part us, or rob us of that blessing ! Heavenly affection ! Heavenly trust of soul to soul ! This *can* soften all afflictions, if it is genuine and lasting, as it is in noble hearts. The summer sunshine of joy is not its chosen place ; it burns with its clearest light in the dark winter of sorrow ; when heart is pressed to heart, and one has no hope but in the other, no care but for the other. Do you know this as it is ? Do you dare to front it, not decked in the stage-light of the imagination, but in the squalid repulsiveness of the actual world ? Then, my little Ruth, thou art a heroine, and I would not give thee for a kingdom !

It is thus I change from week to week, and from

day to day ! Heaven knows I have no wish to deceive you ; but to show you all that is in me, all my feelings and fantasies as I view the brightest or the darkest side of our fortunes. By and by you will learn what manner of man I am. As yet I sometimes scarcely know *myself*.

But now is not the time for speculations with pen and ink, since we are so soon to meet face to face ! O that this were a palace of the Fairies, with rosy gardens and velvet lawns, and stately chambers full of sumptuous delights ! Not an insufficient farm-cottage, surrounded with oats and cattle ! You will come to it however, and your love of me will make it pleasant. But when ? when ? Are you arrived at Dumfries ? How long are you to loiter there ? No small impatience on your account prevails here ; I am asked day after day ; “ Hast thou got a Letter yet, and when *is* she coming ? ” Do come as soon as you are able : I know you will. The pony has ceased to kick, has had a serious distemper in the throat which has brought all its humours away, and it now munches oats and clover and ambles to and fro “ as temperate as a lamb.” I do believe a week or two of it would do you more good than all the Doctors of the county. Or if you want galloping, there is Larry the flame-coloured colt [who] will fly with you like a “ perfect ” Pegasus while his strength lasts, nay leap gates and swim rivers. Besides the *clegs* (gadflies) are all dead now ; the “ Lammas-flood ”¹ also is over, the fields are growing white for harvest, and the season is at the finest.

¹ Lammas = loaf-mass, or feast of the “ first fruits,” held on the 1st of August. The Lammas-floods or “ spates ” are storms of rain and wind, generally occurring (in Scotland) in the early days of August.

Come, *meine Liebe* ! I long to see thy fair face again, and to have that little *kiss*, which by all laws human and divine belongs to me by imprescriptible right. Dost thou mean to cheat me, thou infatuated creature ? I swear thou shalt not !

You talk of a “ day or two ” ; but we will appoint no time ; for this I fear will be found a very stinted allowance. A day or two ! You will stand amazed here for the space of *three* days and nights at least, and be unable to utter any word of intelligible import. Stay so long as you can hold it out, and then you shall go with my best blessing. Bring chintz or drugget gowns with you, lest your silks be spoiled here ; also a stock of needles. We have books for wet weather ; and if you speak me fair, for the matter of ten kisses or so, I will give you a *Mährchen* of Ludwig Tieck’s to render into English. Besides, it seems, we have a considerable stock of *quarrels* to accomplish and abolish. On the whole, I doubt not, the time will not hang very heavy on our hands. So come and try.

Now write to me and say when I am to look for you. If you like it any better, I will bring the ponies up to Dumfries in person some morning, and take you down with me that very evening. We are but fourteen miles off, and a carrier (to Ecclefechan) passes close by us every Thursday-morning. Perhaps you will still think the coach preferable : either way you like ; only do not linger. Let me hear, at any rate, as soon as possible.

I meant to write three lines, and behold my sheet is full to the very edge ! Next time, I shall be brief as a Grace before meat. I am not as the Scribes and Pharisees that think they shall be heard

for their many words. This journey to Bolton Abbey is of no unpromising description, if it had a little more certainty. I think it would give you pleasure, tho' perhaps far less than you anticipate, and might also do you good. The "noble Lady" has a spice of real nobleness in her, tho' it is so veiled in waving folds of sentiment and rhetoric that you can never tell its quantity or quality with any accuracy. Perhaps she will teach you to — rest. Mr. Montagu, I prophesy, will *not* delight you. He is a good natured caricature of a Philosopher; headstrong as a mule, with immense playfulness which is not half so charming as he thinks; Bacon, everlasting Bacon, hovers in every second sentence that he utters. He and I stood aghast at one another for many months; till at last I resigned myself to fate, and was content to come and touch the worthy man as it were with the point of one of my fingers. Bolton Abbey is an inn. But *basta! basta!* [enough! enough!]. Write to me directly, lest I cease to love you in the interim. For the present I am thine entirely,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 131

T. Carlyle, to Miss Baillie Welsh, Dumfries

HODDAM HILL, Tuesday, '30 August, 1825.'

[By post-mark.]

MY DEAREST, — Your Letter¹ had the words "too late" stamped upon it, and it did not reach

¹ The Letter to Carlyle's mother, of 27th August, printed in "New Letters and Memorials," i. 8.

us till yesternight. I am for Annan today to bathe, and if I make speed, this may still reach you this afternoon.

On Thursday night at a quarter before eight, I shall be waiting for you at the end of the Hoddam Bridge road, with some sort of quadruped to bring you hither. A rustic welcome awaits you to our rustic accommodation. On my Mother's part, I can promise you, it comes from the heart; and this, I know will make up for everything in your eyes. *So mache Dich auf, mein Kind* [So make haste, my Child]! The fairest season of the year is gone, and the hurlyburly of harvest will obstruct us; but I am still here, and my heart is as true to thee as ever. There is still air to breathe, and a Sun to light us; and we have ears and eyes, and a thousand things to say and see. *So mache Dich auf!* I long to behold thee once more, and press thy heart to mine. *Addio!* I am thine forever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 132

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

KELHEAD KILNS, Friday-morning, '2 Sept. 1825.'

GOOD MORNING, SIR,—I am not at all to blame for your disappointment last night.¹ The fault was

¹ Miss Welsh had taken the wrong coach, and did not arrive at a "quarter to eight" as she had written, but at some hour so much later that she had been given up for the night.—Carlyle has given a full and very interesting account of Miss Welsh's visit to Hoddam Hill, in the "New Letters and Memorials," i. 3–8. In his account of this visit Carlyle makes a mistake as to its duration when he speaks of "eight or nine days as the limit." Miss Welsh staid at Hoddam Hill from the 2d to the 19th of September,

partly your own and still more the landlady's of the Commercial Inn, — as I shall presently demonstrate to you *viva voce*. In the mean time I have billeted myself in a snug little house by the wayside, where I purpose remaining with all imaginable patience till you can make it convenient to come and fetch me; being afraid to proceed directly to Hoddam Hill in case so sudden an apparition should throw the whole family into hysterics. If the pony has any prior engagement, never mind; I can make a shift to *walk* two miles in pleasant company. Any way pray make all possible dispatch, in case the owner of these premises should think I intend to make a regular settlement in them.

Yours,

JANE.

LETTER 133

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

‘DUMFRIES,’ Tuesday-night, ‘20 September, 1825.’

DEAREST, — I cannot lie down tonight, until I have *written* the farewell and the blessing which I was cruelly prevented from speaking. Oh, what a sad heart is mine this night! And yours too, I know is sad; and I cannot comfort you, cannot kiss away the gloom from your brow! Miles of distance are already betwixt us; and when we shall meet again, and where, and how, God only knows. But dearest Love! what I would give to have you here, — within my arms for one, one moment! To part so from *you!* to go our dreary separate ways without exchanging one word of comfort! Oh God! this

is falling from the azure heaven on the miry earth! When shall I be so happy again as I have been in these last weeks? I dare not look into the future: hope seems dead within me. Write, my Darling, and speak consolation if you can; I am very desolate.

There is nothing here but confusion and disquiet. It was *not* Robert [Welsh] whom we saw; but he is still staying in the house; and tho' it were possible to avoid him here, I have the prospect of meeting him at Boreland¹ on Friday! My Grandmother and Aunts have been lecturing to me, at great length, on the impropriety of "shunning so near a relative, like a pestilence"; and I have borne it all with patience, tho' they might have spared themselves the pains. I needed no instructions of theirs to point out the best to be done in my present circumstances. My resolution was taken before I crossed their threshold, to shake hands with my Uncle, if he were so disposed. If not, to treat him as a stranger who had done me no injury. I shall meet him to-morrow-morning, I suppose, at breakfast. What matters it whom I meet so long as I am parted from you?

George [Welsh] was here today and departed only an hour before I arrived. He cannot come again till Thursday. This is all very cross. I found a Letter (very kind) from my Mother awaiting me; and two others which I have not had heart to open yet. She makes no comment on my visit to Hoddam Hill, whatever; but approves of the rest of my arrangements, — which is so far good.

Give my kindest regards to your Mother and all

¹ Her uncle George Welsh's farm near Southwick, Galloway.

the rest. "While I live, or think, or love,"¹ I shall retain a grateful recollection of their good will and good offices towards me, although I could not articulate one word on the subject at parting. — God Almighty bless you, Soul of my existence! I shall think of you every hour till we meet again. In sadness and perplexities we part; but we love each other, and in this we are more blessed than millions. Farewell!

I am your own Jane for ever and ever.

[*On Margin*]: Day is returned, but I shall not see you! No one is waiting for me in the breakfast-parlour with glad, kind looks. Alas, alas! the Sabbath weeks are past and gone! Write on Wednesday: I shall not enjoy one happy moment till then. I am yours, Oh that you knew how wholly yours!

LETTER 134

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

'DUMFRIES, 21 September, 1825.'

HERE am I writing again, in a Bookseller's shop. I have been thro' all the Milliners' in Dumfries in search of a decent-looking cap to send to your kind-

¹ The quotation is from a little verse of farewell addressed to Miss Welsh, on her leaving Hoddam Hill (19th September), by the little poetess Jean Carlyle:

"May Heaven guide thee, dearest Friend!
May Fortune sweetly smile on thee!
And while I live or think or love,
'Thou shalt be still as dear to me."

On the same occasion Carlyle wrote the little poem which appears in Appendix A, No. 13.

hearted Mother, by way of pattern; but there is nothing forthcoming that she would consent to wear, even for my sake. *N'importe*, I will make her one with my own fingers, in the course of the Winter, which shall create a new epoch in the history of needlework. In the meanwhile, that I may not have my walk entirely for nothing, I have gotten a neck-kerchief for *you*. You will be forced to think of me every time you put it on. I wish the hour of Mr. Notman's¹ departure allowed me time to hem it. Jane however, I dare say, can do it as well. — God bless you again, my own Darling!

Your Own.

LETTER 135

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

TEMPLAND, 22 September, 1825.'

[By Post-mark.]

MY DEAREST, — I wish I may not tire you with Letters; but today, I write on business, and in the greatest possible haste, the gig being waiting for me at the door.

I had a Letter from my Mother yesterday, full of confusion worse confounded, regarding the letting of Craigenputtock. She has had two offers for it in my absence, and seemed quite undecided whether to accept them or not. If there is any chance of your Brother taking it, *I* would prefer *him* infinitely before any other man. And accordingly I wrote off to my Mother, instantly, begging her to come

¹ The carrier's.

under no engagement until he (Alick) had looked at the place and made up his mind. Her answer is just arrived, and is very obliging. She is quite willing to let the matter rest till she hears further from me. So pray ride over to Craigenputtock, as soon as possible, and tell me if Alick really *wishes* to have the place, and what he is willing to give for it. I will not tell you what the others have offered, that he may go entirely on his own judgement. Write on Wednesday all about it, or see me. I do not know what time I shall go into Town, or where I shall be; but I will leave my address at the Commercial Inn, as soon as I arrive. — Come, my Angel, business will be an excuse for my seeing you again.

I was never so hurried or so plagued in my life. God Almighty bless you. I am ever yours.

[*No signature.*]

LETTER 136

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

HODDAM HILL, 1 October, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — I hope you pity me for this painful disappointment, which I suffer in common with yourself. At present I am quite unfit for coming; ever since you saw me I have been much sicker than usual; I am drowned in drugs, and one of the dreariest personages in this side of the County. Perhaps I might be able to set out to-morrow; but that also is uncertain: so fearing that you may become anxious about me, I am dispatching this by the Annan Post, which last resource will itself fail in a few moments.

Guess my hurry and perplexity and chagrin. Write to me tomorrow; and if possible contrive some errand for me still. I had many verbal explanations about this same lease:¹ if your Mother think this offer worth attending to, I may, in spite of all this, still come and see you about Thursday. Write, my Angel! I am very unhappy; but I love you as my life, and far more.

Mrs. Johnston² has sent you her Verses, at least such I suppose is the packet she enclosed to me the other day. All here, from the youngest to the oldest send you their heartiest love. God bless you! I am your own forever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 137

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

TEMPLAND, Thursday, '6 October, 1825.'

MY DEAREST, — I would have answered your Letter yesterday as you desired, only my Mother was in such perplexity about this unhappy Farm of hers that she required a day to consider what was best to be done. The result of her deliberations you will find on the foregoing page, on which I forbear to make any commentary. You may believe I was never more vexed and angry in my life. . . .

And you have been sick too! Oh me! And I

¹ Of Craigenputtock, for which an offer in his father's name is enclosed in the above Letter. Mrs. Welsh had bound herself to accept the highest offer, and James Carlyle's being less than Blacklock's, the latter was preferred.

² Of The Grange. — See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 7.

not near to nurse and comfort you! But I am thankful it was no worse. I did not know what to think. All Monday I sat at the window looking out for you; and when night came, I could not sleep for my foolish forebodings. On Tuesday the same observations were repeated, with hope deferred, which maketh the heart sick; so that by the time your Letter arrived, I was half-distracted with fear of I knew not what disaster. Oh Dearest! anxiety is fearfully multiplied to me since my existence was connected with yours; yet I do not wish it otherwise; for it is better to suffer with *you* than to be happy alone. Are you well again, and will you still come? You need not want for an errand: there is Mrs. Johnston's packet, too precious to be entrusted to Notman, and "*Stumme Liebe*" ["Dumb Love"],¹ if *that* is not sufficient. Come, my Darling! My Grandfather and Aunt will give you no freezing reception. I have prepared them to like you; and they *will* like you provided you do not play the *Etourdi*,² and counteract my pains. My Aunt bids me repeat to you, in her name, a message from Margaret Betson, in consequence of your regards which I sent her in my last Letter: "that every one who loved her adored Jane Welsh, is sure of having a friend in *her*." My Mother too will be glad to see you, that is, if she happens to be in the same humour she is in now, — which I am sorry I cannot promise with any degree of certainty. But there is another person here whose heart's-welcome will *not* fail you, and for her single sake you would come tho' the chances of enjoyment to yourself were even fewer than they are. You will be here, then,

¹ See "German Romance."

² See Molière's Play, "L'Etourdi."

when? On Monday we will look for you at dinner, unless you write before that time. Adieu, then, till Monday at three o'clock,—

Ever ever yours,

JANE WELSH.

My kindest love to your Mother, and all the rest. Mag's hand-frills are finished, and a purse for Alick, besides. I hope you admire my industry.

If you cannot be here before three on Monday, do not fail to write by the first post: I have had quite enough of *bootless* expectation.

LETTER 138

After a short visit to Templand

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

HODDAM HILL, 19 October, 1825.

MY DEAREST,—It is now a week since I lost you, and time that I should have recourse to writing, the poor substitute for that lively interchange of feelings which we can now enjoy no longer. Let us be thankful that this inadequate expedient is not taken from us also! That we are still living, still near each other; still obstinately hoping that brighter days await us, that a day will come when we shall part no more!

I predicted, without great gifts of prophecy, that I should be sad when parted from you; and I am sorry to say that my prediction has been fully realized. I had a melancholy journey home that day, by the graves of my ancestors,¹ with the thoughts

¹ On his way home from Templand, Carlyle would probably pass close by the battleground of Dryfe Sands (1593), where the Car-

of bygone joys for my companions! Your dreary silent walk by my side, your mute parting kiss, the tear that I saw hanging in your long black eyelashes when I went away, all hung like a black cloud over my remembrances, and withdrew the sunshine from the scenes we had lately seen together in such peace and gladness. But wherefor should a living man complain? If we have joy, we *must* have sorrow; if we are not *wae* to part, how should we be *blithe* to meet? There is a misery beyond the sharpest parting sadness; the misery of a heart grown dead to sadness as to joy; that loves not, fears not, hopes not, but sits amid utter desolation, reckless of all further ravages. This also I have felt; I ought rather to rejoice that I feel it no longer.

Since my return and settlement, the case is but little mended. I have been taking some glimpses into the Books of Conscience, and in truth I find a weighty balance standing there against me. What am I to do, or to attempt? How am I again to mingle in the coarse turmoil of men, and gather from their selfishness and harsh contradiction the means of happiness? And thou, too, my kind, trustful Jane! My poverty, and all my wealth! O why should I be as a broken reed, and wound the hand that leans on me! But this is useless murmuring: if aught can be done, let us do it quickly; if not, let nothing at least be said. It is not evil but the shadow of evil which affrights me.

lyles and the Johnstones fought side by side victoriously against the powerful family of Maxwells. Many fell on both sides. I remember once driving with Carlyle past these Sands, and he gave me a history of the battle in considerable detail and in touching and graphic words.—The ancient burying-ground of the Carlyle family was Pennersaugh, half a mile or so from Ecclefechan, and on the side remote from Templand.

Things are not worse but better than they were. It is only that I am parted from you, and that old "October Tirl-the-trees" is riding on his furious blast, and bringing desolation to the world within as to the world without. The Summer with his glory has left me, and the very clouds of imagination in which I lay asleep are passing with him, and I look down upon the naked barrenness of my destiny as it is, not (let me hope) to bewail it, or curse it, but to front its earnest difficulties with all the strength and craft that is in me. Up! Up! thou sluggard! not to plan but to execute what is already planned, however pitiful! — I have worked two days honestly at Tieck; in other ten, I hope to be done with him, and perhaps attempting something better. Fear not utterly, my Darling! There are moments when with thee against my heart, I feel more than match for whatever can befall us. Life is yet all before us, and many proud hours when we shall withstand in true and closest affection all its storms and perils, and be more to one another than all the universe besides.

The fire is blazing in the room, and the rain is raging vainly without the window; but *she* with the long black curling locks is not here! Nothing but Jack with his history of *Arzneikunde*, and I with my lazy pen, sitting front to front, in silence. How altered and forlorn! Yet I am far from regretting that you came, and made a blank among us by your absence. I never knew so much of you before, my soul was never so united to yours, never saw it face to face, and dared to love it as now. Let us trust that these "Sabbath-weeks" were but an emblem of the long Sabbath-years we are to spend together forever and ever! One would think that they might be made as happy; but that were an error.

I am tattling very sadly, yet I must continue for a little. My Mother's thanks were boundless when she saw your kind remembrance of her; she will wear the gown, come what come may, and think of you I doubt not every time she puts it on. Alick's purse brought a grateful smile over the features of the rugged husbandman: he is up with it today at Dumfries, perhaps at Dabton, beside you, in treaty with *the* Major¹ for the farm of Shawbrae. Jack pursues his moral philosophy with the same broad placidity as ever; he has changed his celebrated moral aphorism² lately; and now declares that: "There is nothing but a *mixture* of good and evil in the world, Mother"; a truth which I think obtains as little patronage as its predecessor. He bids me send you his kindest regards.

On Sunday I had a Letter from Robert Dickson of Annan, informing me that his brother-in-law [Edward Irving] was to "pass thro'" the place on Thursday, and wished to see me then. His poor little boy Edward is dead! I grieve for the good Orator and still more for his Wife; for their hearts were set upon the child. Tomorrow I go down to meet him; as I conjecture, for a few minutes. This does seem a perverse arrangement; but the man is married, and belongs to Isabella. "Let us pity

¹ Major Crichton, factor to the Duke of Queensberry. Dabton, the factor's residence, is about a mile north of Thornhill, some two miles from Templand.

² "He [Dr. Carlyle] was wont in his babbly way, while at breakfast with Mother and me, to remark when the least thing was complained of or went wrong, 'Nothing but evil in the world, Mother,' till one day Mother took him sharply up on theological grounds. Ever onward from which he used to make it, 'Nothing but a *mixture* of good and evil.'"—(MS. Note by Carlyle on a Letter of his wife's.)

the poor white man,"¹ and not blame him too harshly! Who knows but the case may be his own? (*A rap over the knuckles; and exit,—till tomorrow.*)

Friday-morning. — I was interrupted on Wednesday-night by a rap over the knuckles, and a call to supper; and till this moment I have never been able to resume my operations. Yesterday, I went down with Alick (going to Annan Fair) to meet the Orator according to appointment. I found him sitting in his Father's little parlour,² among a crowd of Cousins and admirers, of whom he soon shook himself loose, to go and stroll among the fields with me. The sight of the poor Orator mollified my heart, and his cordial welcome awoke in me some old feelings which late events have been doing much to extinguish. He is sallow and careworn; his boy died of whooping-cough about a week ago, a few days after his Wife (who was not allowed to see the little sufferer!) had brought him a Daughter. Yet he bears these things wonderfully; his vivacity has not forsaken him; he talks with undiminished eagerness about the "spirit of the Gospel" and "the mind of man"; now and then as our dialogue proceeded he even laughed with all his ancient vehemence. I will not judge harshly of this strange man. He has a heart with many virtues; and tho' overgrown with still ranker weeds than formerly of what in another I should call

¹ "Let us pity the poor white man;
No mother has he to fetch him milk,
No wife to grind his corn." — Mungo Park's "Travels,"
ch. xv.

² Edward Irving's father lived at Annan, and was a tanner by trade.

cant and affectation, it ill beseems me to forget the noble plants that flourish in the midst of them. I was sad to the very heart when I saw him step out of his Father's little quiet room, to dash once more into the great billowy sea of life. I walked with him two miles on the Carlisle road by the light of the moon; he was going towards Dornock to see an uncle, and await the coach for London: we parted in the howling of the north-wind, and I turned back across the moors to Hoddam Hill to meditate in silence on the chances and changes of this strange whirlpool of a world.

The enclosed Letter he said he had written two days before the unexpected death of his child. He had purposed to visit you at Templand along with me; and hoped that we should have much happiness together. Be not too severe upon the man! He merits some love from you: as men go, there are a thousand worse for one better.

I saw young Montagu likewise at Annan. Be thankful that you did not go to visit this untoward cub! I never in my life [saw] a human biped of a more dour and sinister humour. Duncan,¹ "for the want of proper accommodation," means to part with him at New-year's day: Charles pokes his lip, and curls his little snub nose, and cannot determine what to do. The other day he wrote to me, to go to Bolton Abbey and join his Father and Badams. For certain I was to go! For certain I wrote a Letter and did not go an inch.

Irving and I had some talk about the London University. It seems he had been a party in some of the conferences which the Utilitarians had carried

¹ Rev. Dr., of Ruthwell.

on with the Religionists; he was even a Committee-man at one time; but left the concern, "because religion was not cared for." I have still some faint thoughts of looking after some appointment there; and some faint idea that I might succeed: but there is nothing fixed yet. You shall hear directly if anything occur.

You cannot get this Letter till Saturday-night. I grieve for the disappointment you will suffer, if you chance before then to get into the expecting vein. I might have sent it yesterday; but without news of the Orator I thought it would more irritate than satisfy your curiosity. Be not anxious about me or yourself, my own Jane! We love one another, and the most precious part of our happiness is out of the power of Fortune. — You will write to me next week, and "tell me all you know?"¹ I shall expect your Letter. — You must present my kindest regards to every member of the hospitable family of Templand: your Grandfather and your Aunt were very good to me; passing good considering my untoward habitudes and situation. The best love of all this household is with you. God bless you, my own Dearest! —

Yours *aufewig*,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 139

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

TEMPLAND, Tuesday, '25 October, 1825.'

MY DEAREST, — Your Letter was very consolatory to me; and much do I stand in need of consol-

¹ Appendix A, No. 11.

ation ; for, since you departed this life, I have been the forlornest, most dispirited of creatures. "What can be worse than to dwell here, driven out from bliss,"¹ amid wind and whist and ill-humour? Is there any livelier image of Hell? O Time, bring the roses as fast as you can ; for the "winter of our discontent"² is ill to bear !

It was on the day after your departure, that the storm, which has been brewing in my Mother's mind for many weeks, broke forth in copious eloquence. Oh, mercy! what cruel, unreasonable things she said! But nothing distressed me so much as her bitter reflexions against you, whom she accused of having "bewitched and poisoned my mind." She was unjust, I told her ; my connection with so wise and honourable a man could be attended with no ill consequences ; and, any way, such language *now* was out of time, — particularly since it was with her knowledge and consent, that I had come to look upon you as my partner for life. She sulked for four-and-twenty hours, and then wrote me a long epistle, wherein she demonstrated (*not* by geometrical reasonings) that I was utterly lost to all sense of duty ; and took much bootless pains to explain the inconsistency of her conduct towards *you*. "She had indeed given her consent to our union," she said, "when you should have made yourself *a name and a situation in life*; but only because I asked it, with tears, upon my bended knees, at a time too, when my life seemed precarious" (to the best of my recollection I was then enjoying tolerable health). "Afterwards, however, when you came to Haddington, and she watched your temper and perceived its *effect*

¹ "Paradise Lost," Bk. ii. 85-6.

² "King Richard III," Act i. sc. 1.

upon me, it was then her soul was torn," &c., &c. A pack of damned nonsense the whole of it! "Temper"! "Effect"! Truly, she has seen her own temper have a hundred times worse effects upon me than ever yours had, without being troubled with such tender solicitude. No! my own Darling! we shall not be parted on this account. Your irritability is the very natural consequence of continual suffering; when you are well and happy (oh that you were!), you will be the best-humoured man alive. And tho' you should never be good-humoured, what then? Do we not love each other? And what is love if it cannot make all rough places smooth? *Nein!* [No!] I am not afraid that my happiness will be wrecked upon this rock; nor is my Mother either, if the truth were told. I could lay my life this grand objection never entered her head till she was sitting with the pen in her hand, hunting after an excuse for so much caprice.

Another cause of offence is my intimacy with Mrs. Montagu, "a woman whom I never saw, whom I know nothing about, and for whom, nevertheless, I have the most unbounded love and admiration." Now, Heaven grant me patience! for this would have made Job himself cry "Damnation"! and gallop half a mile! What! my honest esteem for a clever, high-minded woman, who has offered herself to me as a friend, with the most captivating grace and frankness, is to be looked upon and persecuted as a heinous fault! But it is to no purpose! I will go on corresponding with Mrs. Montagu as long as I have ink and paper; and no man, woman or child shall prevent me from loving and admiring her as ardently as I please. You, too, my Dearest, I will continue to love and admire, tho' the whole earth

should blame my choice; for I know in whom I have put my trust, and my resolution is steadfast as a rock. I have told this to my Mother, once for all, in a tone of decision, which should prevent further remonstrance.

Nevertheless, I am anything but insensible to her displeasure; and rather than be under it I would make every sacrifice consistent with reason. But it would be folly to make myself the slave of her variable humours. Oh, it is heart-breaking, shocking, to live in this manner, with one to whom I am bound by the holiest tie! Deprived of her sympathy in the matters which lie next my heart! obliged to be silent on my dearest hopes,—except when I am called upon to defend them! How different it would be, if there were that cordial, trustful affection betwixt us which ought to be betwixt parent and child! But, alas, alas! we understand each other no more.¹

What will become of me till I have you again? Tell our worthy Doctor to write me out a recipe for patience, the stock which I received from nature

¹ Miss Welsh's bitter complaints against her mother are hasty and not well-founded. There has seldom been a kinder or more indulgent mother than Mrs. Welsh, and her daughter at the bottom of her heart knew this and really loved and esteemed her. Miss Welsh, being an only child, and frequently an invalid, had been—especially after her father's death—perhaps a little too much indulged, and had insensibly formed a *habit of complaining*. Her complaints in later years against her husband, to which unfortunately so much prominence has been unfairly given, are still worse-founded, and have considerably less of reality in them than those which she here, and elsewhere in these volumes, records against her mother. How easy it would have been for a romancing biographer—especially one with an elastic conscience—to have portrayed Mrs. Welsh as a cruel “domestic tyrant,” and her daughter's life beside her as a piteous, heartrending tragedy!

being well-nigh exhausted, or converted into *furor*.¹ Our departure has been already talked of for one week; in another, perhaps, with the blessing of God, it may be executed. But decision is a thing which has naught to do with *our* proceedings.

I have had an answer from Mrs. Montagu, full of rhetoric and kindness; but no matter for the rhetoric! She is good to me, and charity covereth a multitude of sins. She says: "Mr. Carlyle ought not to have stept in between you and your kind intention;² nay more, he ought himself to have seen my boy. How many miles I should have gone willingly to please him or aught belonging to him! But a man is always a — man, a fine animal in his way, yet selfish *withal*." Do now, lay this to heart, "Dear"; and be tolerant of Mr. Charles, — cub altho' he be.

So Edward Irving is gone! gone without seeing me! Well, times are changed, and we are changed in them. But it matters not. I pity the poor man for the loss of his little boy; it is well, however, that he bears it so manfully. According to Mrs. Montagu's account of the matter, I was imagining him "in the most awful distress, quite overwhelmed by the sudden stroke." But our fair friend is a lover of the picturesque. You might have read his Letter to me, *en passant*, a constrained, affected, extraordinary performance as may be! Poor Edward! poor white man! Let us pity him, as you observe, and be thankful! — Oh Lord!

I was interrupted yesterday by furious rapping

¹ "Furor fit læsa sæpius patientia." — See *ante*, Letter 97.

² To visit Mrs. Montagu at Bolton Abbey.

at the door. It was my Lancer Cousin!¹ arrived in a fine emblazoned chariot with four horses; and all glittering in jewels, from the gold pendant of his rose-coloured cap, to the ruby buckles of his slippers. You never saw such a man! He is, if possible, more Adonis-like, witty and elegant than ever. Such an air! such a voice! such a profusion of little dogs! I wish, in my heart, he were returned to the place whence he came; for I will confess to you, dear Friend, that—you have not the slightest cause to be jealous! Jealous! Oh mercy! when I compare this fine-gentleman with the *man* I love, what is he after all? A mere painted butterfly, fluttering over the flowery surface of the Earth,—the creature of a sun-shiny day! while he—my own—is like to the royal Eagle, who soars aloft thro' the regions of ether, and feasts his eye on the glories of the sun. “*Zwey unverträglichere Gegentheile fand die Natur in ihrem Umkreis nicht!*”² [Two more irreconcilable opposites were not found in the realm of Nature!] But, “*Ohe, jam satis!*” We have had another visitor of an altogether different species,—the old woman of Craigenputtock, who came riding on the “ill-thrawn beast,” bringing “a wee compliment” along with her, in the shape of a pair of black silk mittens. Poor old Mary! she had got them, I suppose, at some funeral, and laid them by, to make me wae for a whole evening.

Pity you did not see Dr. Badams! and ten thousand pities Dr. Badams did not see me! Suppose now that Mrs. Montagu and I had been of the party, and that your friend had fallen in

¹ Captain Baillie.

² Schiller's “*Don Karlos*,” Act i. sc. 2.

love with me, and rolled on the floor!¹ I could never, certainly, have withstood such a demonstration; but must have gone off to Birmingham on the spot! And what would Mr. Wisdom have said then? That I was squirting a syringe in the face of an adamantine rock? Or would he not rather have rolled upon the floor in his turn? You will tell me when I am gone to Birmingham.

"Tell our Brother John to write us,"² as soon as he arrives in Edinburgh, that I may know what house in what street contains the best of Doctors; and tell him moreover, that "everything in the world is made up of heaven and hell," or he would be oftener at my side to gladden me with "the broad Atlantic of his countenance." Most excellent Doctor! I have a real affection for him. My kindest regards to all the rest, not excepting even wee *affectation*.³ I have been twice at Dabton, and have *not* executed your commission. Nevertheless, you must not think me cold in the service. To get your people into a good Farm, I would readily give one of my fingers (with your permission); but I found it *impossible* to overcome my horror of asking anything like a favour. You will write early next week to George Square (the Glasgow project is given up), and you will bear in recollection that a fortnight used to be the time, which ought not surely to be lengthened *now*, now that we are more to each other than ever. I hope in Heaven you may go to London; I like the idea of it more than any scheme you have proposed to

¹ Like Dugald G.—See *ante*, Letter 99.

² See Appendix A, No. 11.

³ Carlyle's youngest sister, Janet, afterwards Mrs. Robert Hanning.

me. London must surely be a far finer place to live in than cold Edinburgh. But you are talking, young lady, of matters which you do not understand; and besides it is time you should make an end of your Letter. *Eh bien!* plan as your reason and the gods direct you. So that the thought of me gives vigour to the execution, it is enough. My will is cast into fusion. "*Was sind die Haupttugenden der Weiber? Geduld und Gehorsam.*" [What are the chief virtues of women? Patience and obedience.]

This will cost you double postage; but if I choose to write two sheets, you cannot choose but pay for them. I am done, *console toi!* God bless you, my Dearest. I am yours all,

JANE B. WELSH.

Have you heard of Mr. Gillespie's death? He was married but a few weeks ago to a young lady whom he was engaged to for years. This is truly awful. O that I could believe like Mrs. Strachey! for except the word of God, there is no stronghold here on earth.

Should the words *Libertas*,¹ &c, begin all of them with capitals? Write them down for me, and also the motto round the candle; tho' I rather think I shall fix upon *Damnation*, after all. It is short and expressive.

¹ *Libertas, Veritas, Paupertas*, the motto of De Lambert (Liberty, Truth, Poverty). The motto round the burning candle (Carlyle's own) was, "*Terar dum prosim*" (Let me be consumed, provided I be of use).

LETTER 140

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

HODDAM HILL, 4th November, 1825.

MY DEAREST,—I thank you heartily for your long good-humoured Letter, and for the august mandate smuggled into the Newspaper, the behest of which I proceed with all despatch and submission to fulfil. In spite of your “*Verdammniss*” [damnation], I will not think you utterly unhappy at Templand. The resources of the gallant Lancer cannot be exhausted already: be content with him, like a good prudent girl, for a day or two; and think that long before Eternity is done, you *must* be delivered from *that* sort of grievances. Yet I am not without sympathy for your distresses, opposite as they are to my own; on the contrary I feel them more and more deeply and distinctly every day, and pray with more and more earnestness that the time were come which *is* to “bring the roses,”¹ and free us both from such vile durance forever. Our *will* is not submitted to our *conscience*; so we are not even calm, to say nothing of happy. I lie helpless and unrestful, one part of me sunk in the mire, while the other part is struggling towards the third heaven; there is no unity in my condition; and you, still more helpless and unrestful, are constrained to stand in silence, amid multiplied obstructions, watching the progress of my struggles. Let us be patient and resolute, and trust in ourselves and each other! I maintain that the weal of every human being, not

¹ “*Zeit bringt Rosen*” (Time brings roses; German proverb).

perhaps his enjoyment or his suffering, but his true and highest welfare, lies within himself. O that we had wisdom to put this weighty truth in practice! That we could think with resolute calmness, and decide with rigorously active steadfastness; to know our duty (for a duty every living creature has), and do it with our whole heart and our whole soul! This is the everlasting rock of man's security; against which no tempest or flood shall prevail. This is the true feeling of the Poet and the Sage,¹ which I never understood till lately, which many never understand at all: "sufficiently provided for *within*," the outward gifts or amercements of Fortune are but the soft or the hard materials out of which he is to build his fairest work of art, a life worthy of himself and the vocation wherewith he is called. But I am verging towards *cant*; so I shall hasten to the right-about.

Your Mother is not wise or just in spoiling the stinted enjoyments of your present way of life by the reflexions and remonstrances with which she pursues you. Her views of me and my connection with you I cannot greatly blame; they coincide too nearly with my own. But what, one might ask her, does she mean you to *do*? Anything? If so, it were better that she simply proposed it, and backed it out by all attainable reasons in simplicity and quiet; that if just and fit, you might go thro' with it at all haps and hazards, instantly and completely. If nothing, then silence is the least that can be asked of her. Speech that leads not to action, still more that hinders it, is a nuisance on the Earth. Let *us* remember this, as well as call on others to remember it! But after all where is the mighty grief? *Is* it

¹ Goethe. — See "Meister's Apprenticeship," Bk. vi.

ruin for you to think of giving yourself to me, here as I am, in the naked undissembled meanness of my actual state? Consider this, with a cold clear eye, not in the "purple light of love,"¹ but in the sharp chill light of prudence: if your mind still have any wavering, follow the truth fearlessly, not heeding *me*, for I am ready with alacrity to forward your anticipated happiness in any way. Or was this your love of me no girlish whim, but the calm deliberate self-offering of a woman to the man whom her reason and her heart had made choice of? Then is it a crime in you to love me, whose you are in the sight of God and men? Can you love me *too* much? Love me, my Dearest, and let the Devil and the world chatter over it as they like!

This story of my temper is not worth much.² I actually do not think myself an ill-natured man, nor even, all things considered, very ill-tempered! Really it is wearisome to think of these things. What counsel to give you I know not. Submission has its limits; when not based on conviction it degenerates into hypocrisy, and encourages demands which perhaps ought to be resisted. But in asserting your rights be meek and reasonable; carefully avoid the faults that offend you in the other. Above all, do not cease to love your Mother, and to sweeten her days for her by every method in your power. What is this caprice, and sullenness to you, but unhappiness in herself; an effort to increase her

1 "O'er her warm cheek, and rising bosom, move
The bloom of young Desire, and purple light of Love."

GRAY, "Progress of Poesy," i. 3, 16-17.

2 Carlyle's biographer prints this (with variations); but he takes care not to let it be known what "This story of my temper" was, or Miss Welsh's opinion of it.

own scanty stock of satisfaction at your expense, or rather to shift a portion of her own suffering upon you? She *cannot* cease to love you; and this is saying much. For me I beg of you to take no thought: her anger at me, her aversion to me, shall never be remembered against her. They do not irritate me: why should they? She thinks of me in the main to the full as highly as she ought; and these gusts of unreasonable caprice should be met by increased equability and steady forgiving self-possession; as angry gusts of wind are rendered harmless, not by other conflicting gusts, but by a solid wall of stone and mortar. Think of this, and do it, my good Jane! For you it is far far harder than for me; but this is one of your *duties*, and it will bring its own reward.

Of *the Hill* or myself I have little good to tell you. I finished *Tieck* ten days ago; and then rested for half a week, till I grew so savage that I was forced to begin one of Goethe's *Mährchen*,¹ with which I am more than half done. This Publication [German Romance] must henceforth proceed with spirit! I have written to Tait for fresh materials, having now well nigh determined what pieces are to be selected and how they are to be arranged. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre* [Meister's *Travels*] I intend to make the *third* volume of the book; Musäus and Tieck and some other the *first*; Richter, Hoffman, Müller, &c, the second. I feel some satisfaction in this arrangement, and shall proceed with stern assiduity if possible till it is done.

¹ "Das Mährchen" (*the Tale*). Carlyle gave this translation to his Jane, and published it, with annotations, in "Fraser's Magazine," No. 33 (1832), for her benefit. — See "Miscellanies," vol. iv.

What is the use of this loitering? Why cannot I mingle in the busy current of activity, and fish pearls from it as others do? O thou thrice-cursed health! But fair and softly! I will take thee in flank, if I cannot in front.

During my half-week's repose I was busily meditating some scheme of a *Kunstwerk* [Work of Art] of my own! There are pictures and thoughts and feelings in me, which *shall* come out, tho' the Devil himself withstood it! For this time, it was Larry, not the Devil. That ungrateful untoward nag has used me like a knave. He had taken cold and staid unmolested in his shop for three days; on the fourth I took him out to *walk* round by *the* Smithy and Hoddam Kirk; I was thinking of you and my *Kunstwerk*, when I met a carrier's cart, and my cursed beast, knowing that I was studying and had nothing but a snaffle bridle, got the bit in his teeth, whirled round at full gallop down a steep place, and had my fair person dislodged from his back and trailed some yards upon the base highway in the twinkling of an eye! *Proh pudor!* I was stunned and scratched and thoroughly bemired: I have scarcely got quit of my headache, and the tailor is mending my coat even now. Larry's friendship and mine is at an end! I have got a fierce iron curb for him, and I mount him daily with an oak cudgel, and batter his carcase and gallop him into complete tameness. What a termination for my *novel*! But the time will come, must come!

Jack is going to Edinburgh, he says, on Tuesday week; he will write to you, and see you if you desire it: he sends his kindest regards to you. Poor Jack! I shall be lonely in Winter without him,

tho' his logic has often galled me while he was here. You must write to my Mother, according to your promise: she loves you truly, as do they all. That poor girl in the cottage at the foot of the Tower is departed at last. The other day I was walking at the foot of the hill; and saw among rain and stormy vapour her hearse and humble convoy setting out for the churchyard, and her poor old widowed Mother was standing looking after it beneath the waving leafless tree at the corner of the hut. I could have wept burning tears. Sharpe was hunting on the other side of the glen with a young new-married Wife. *So geht die Welt* [So goes the world].

The words of the motto are: LIBERTAS, VERITAS, PAUPERTAS; there is plenty of room for them in your seal. The motto of the light is: *Terar dum prosim*, written in a circle round the flame of a candle. Take "Damnation," if you dare, you little gypsy! Am not I your — obedient philosopher?

Jack is going off to Ecclefechan, and will carry this, so I must have done. Punctual as clockwork to the fortnight! When shall I hear of you? Write the moment you arrive in Edinburgh; sooner if you linger in setting out. Be happy, my kind Darling, as happy as thou canst! I love thee, and am thine forever. Fortune must and shall look on us less harshly: we shall yet be "one and indivisible," and I shall wear thee in my heart of hearts. I kiss thee truly. Thine *auf ewig*,

T. CARLYLE.

The Newspapers are stopt. Look for no more of them, till I find a more courageous partner than the Ecclefechan Surgeon. *Leb'wohl!*

LETTER 141

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 28th November, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — Your kind command¹ was duly communicated to me, and I calculated on obeying it last Thursday, and this having failed, on every one of the subsequent days. But a fit of diligence has seized me of late weeks ; and as I imagine you yourself would have disapproved of my neglecting my appointed task for such a purpose, I forbore writing in the morning, and every evening some perverse occurrence or another came athwart my measures to prevent it then also. You must forgive this delay, like a good girl as you always are, and believe that tho' silent towards you, I am neither day nor night forgetful of you, nor shall ever be by God's blessing, while I continue in this sojourn of the living and the loving. My Mother has already scolded me sufficiently for my omission : she figures you to be of the same imaginative disposition as herself, and would not have you for a moment exposed to the assaults of that afflicting faculty. You have not done as Job's wife counselled Job, notwithstanding your threat ? No, you are alive still, and love me, and hope to see good things with me in this world after all ! If you were to die, either blessing God or any other way, what should I do, think you ? Where would the living heart remain that I could long to incorporate with my own, the spirit in whose presence

¹ Contained in a Letter of 14th Nov. to Carlyle's mother.

some faint dawn of true existence still visits my bewildered eyes? O my Dearest! surely I am an ungrateful man to murmur at Fate, and forget that it has given me thee! I know, I feel, when the malignant demon leaves me for a moment, that peace from all my woes awaits me in thy arms; that with thee the world shall again become for me a green hospitable field, and the gloomy spectres of imagination fly away before the bright warm sunshine of reality. Why do I forget this, and live without faith in the world? O that faith were changed into Light, that believing had become enjoying! Love me truly, and all will yet be well.

Your Letter to my Mother had been anxiously expected, and was gladly and gratefully received. Had she the pen of the ready writer, she would have sent you a reply of a grander texture than any you have ever got from Bedford-Square itself: but alas, she has scarcely any pen at all, and must live for the present "with a most voiceless thought."¹ She bids me give you her kindest love; she "has a hundred things to say, but" unhappily "cannot put them into language." Jean would have written you a postscript, I doubt not; for she has read and re-read your Letter; but to-day she is at Mainhill, and the wild sleety weather leaves no chance of her returning in time.

I regret heartily this irruption of puppyism, quadruped and biped, with which you are threatened and perhaps even now visited.² It is deplor-

¹ "But as it is, I live and die unheard,
With a most voiceless thought, sheathing it like a sword."

"Childe Harold," Canto iii. st. 97.

² In her Letter to Carlyle's mother (14th Nov.), Miss Welsh had said: "Tell Mr. Carlyle that my handsome cousin [Captain

able to have one's heart vexed, and one's thoughts and occupations put to flight by that inane hubbub : yet what can be done or attempted for deliverance ? Perhaps, caring less about it ! Conceive that you have neither part nor lot in the affair, that your whole duty in it is to keep its influences excluded from your heart and head, and to live as if it were not there. Why should you fret yourself ? Your business for the present is to keep yourself peaceful and still, in the prospect of more active and worthy days : if you can be contented and amused, by any harmless means, it is all that your present situation can be called on to do for you. By taking thought you cannot alter one thread in the tissue of your fate : it is I that must labour for myself and you, to prepare a scene for us to labour in together. Think of this, and let your gay Lancer with his pugs and ponies take his swing before you, as you would a cunning artist that was come to eat fire and emit ribbands for your pastime. The Captain must be better entertainment than is common about Haddington ; and it is right that you be entertained with him. Besides, consider that he is a kindly soul with all his frivolousness, and really loves you ; perhaps is in love with you ; a quality which covereth a multitude of sins. What if you should try a slight flirtation with him, by way of driving on the time ? Perhaps, you had better not, however. There is no use in jesting with edge-tools ; and if he ran away with you, I should be obliged to follow him and pull his dyed whiskers, — unless indeed it were with your own free mind

Baillie] is coming to Haddington with his sister Phœbe, and his valet Henly, and his great dog Toby and, over and above, Dash, Craigen, Fanny and Frisk."

and coöperation, in which case, I suppose, there would be nothing for it but to curse with sufficient emphasis the whole generation of *inexprimables* [unspeakables], and set my house in order, and go and hang myself. A baleful consummation either way!

For the last three weeks I have been the most industrious man in Annandale. It would do you good to see with what steadfastness I equip myself every morning with dreadnaught and wooden shoes and sally forth to walk to the Kelhead Tollbar, regardless of the fury of the elements; then return to breakfast and translate; to mingle in fit proportions throughout the day the exercises of the body and the mind, till late night finds me a sheet further forward in my compilation. I am not happy, but neither am I miserable, and my work advances without injury to my health. Ere long I suppose I shall be in Edinburgh arranging the printing. I have written to Tait for more books, which I expect in a day or two; and I am already done with Goethe's *Mährchen*, and Musäus's *Stumme Liebe* and *Libussa*. The former was meant for you, but for want of other work, I took it up myself. I have still his *Melechsala* before me, and then I bid him adieu with small regret. He is a man of fine talent, but has no genius whatever. One volume of the publication I purpose to occupy with *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, Goethe's last work, instead of *Werther*, which I once had thoughts of, but cannot now abide. There is also one *Maler Müller* (the *Painter Müller*) of whom I hear a most flattering report, tho' he is entirely unknown in this country; from him I calculate on gathering another half volume. On the whole, I begin to be better satisfied

with the aspect of this business ; and at all events eager to get it off my hands. I should not be surprised tho' you saw me in a few weeks ! You shall take me in your arms and kiss me ten times over then ! You must of your own accord !

Jack writes that he saw you on the morning before you went to Haddington. He says you were very kind to him ; but tho' you did not complain to him, he thinks your health is not so good as it was in Summer, and I must write to you not to study. This piece of news threw a damp over me at first, which I have now, I know not on what grounds, contrived to put aside. O my Darling, the bare idea of miseries that *might* too easily occur fills my whole soul with darkness ! Never till I had lost thee should I know how deep and abiding was thy dwelling in my heart. But it must not and shall not be. O, for your love of me, take thought of these things ! Be careful, sedulous, scrupulous about your safety ; for it is mine too. Do you walk daily ? Every day ? There is no drug or doctoring in the whole Pharmacopœia that is worth a pin without this. Promise me that you will observe it, tell me that you are well, and I shall be at ease.

I shall ride to Ecclefechan on the back of Larry with this tonight. Fear not for the ungracious beast ; with martingale and curb and spurs he is quiet as *Garron Bawn*, and could not hurt me tho' he were Bucephalus himself. He is condemned for sale at the first Dumfries Fair ; and I very seldom ride even now. — I am lonely for the want of poor Jack, tho' his logic afflicted me while he was here ; yet I am fast getting used to solitude. Alick and my Mother read beside me at night : for the last

two nights she has been busy with the Life of Mr. John and Mr. Josias [Welsh], your ancestors,¹ from the "Scots Worthies." I objected somewhat to her apotheosis of these noble-minded persons: but she answered: "Say nae ill o' thy ain!" — You will write directly?

Yours *auf ewig*,
T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 142

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

‘HADDINGTON, 8th December, 1825.’

THEY are gone, my Dearest, fairly gone! Mr. Baillie, and Miss Phœbe, and all the dogs, and my Uncle [George Welsh] from Galloway, and his Wife and his Wife's Brother besides. This has been a more terrible infliction than anything that befell our friend Job. Nevertheless, I am still alive, and blessing God for all his mercies, — most of all for the great "temporal blessing" which I enjoy in thee. Indeed, so long as that is continued to me, not all the dogs and dandies betwixt here and Bond Street could drive me to utter despair; for, strange as you may think it, young man, I have an affection for thee which it is not in the power of language to express; and I wot not what evil or combination of evils could prevail to make me entirely wretched, while thou art within reach to comfort me with sweet words of hope and love; and while it is written as with a sunbeam on my soul "He

¹ Miss Welsh was not descended from the John Welsh who married a daughter of Knox, but from John's elder brother, David Welsh of Colliston. — See "Life of John Welsh," by the Rev. James Young (Edinburgh, 1866).

loves me! he is mine!" — Yes, "mine, with life to keep, and scarce with life resign!"¹ Is it not so?

Often you used to tell me, in the days of my *insanity*, that there was something better than fame, "something more exquisite still"; *then* I understood not what you meant, and laughed at the notion of anything being better than fame. But it is far otherwise with me now; for now I know that the deep blessedness of two souls which live in and for each other, *is* best of all that earth and heaven can bestow. This blessedness is *ours*! And yet I am discontented with my lot, because it is not in every particular exactly as I wish it! "So little knows any, but God alone, to value right the good before him!"² Surely it is weak, sinful, in me ever to get out of humour and vex you with complaints. And now that I think of it, I *will* be patient, — for the next four-and-twenty hours, at least!

It rejoices my heart to hear of your late hopeful diligence. Only continue and the roses will be here ere long, and laurels too. Think that every sheet you advance in your appointed work, is a step towards my deliverance from this solitude, — "this cold wild waste where thou art not"; and think what a high recompense awaits thee, all difficulties being overcome, a hot-tempered, portionless Wife!

I must not forget to thank you for your obliging permission to flirt, which doubtless I shall be right glad to avail myself of on some future occasion, tho' in my sweet Cousin's time, I felt indisposed to

¹ "Now thou art mine, forever mine,
With life to keep, and scarce with life resign."

BYRON, "Bride of Abydos," Canto i. 347-8.

² "Paradise Lost," Bk. iv. 201-3.

amuse myself in any such way. To tell you the truth, I am fast losing all favour for this most beautiful of men, who is the express resemblance of Milton's Belial, the fairest and most hollow of all the fallen. I am even seriously meditating to have his hair removed out of my ring. O, I could tell you things of him that would make the hairs of your head stand on end, like quills upon the fretful porcupine, only it would be pity to waste my paper with so worthless a subject.

I am looking forward with much pleasure to having your friend Mr. Johnstone here, that I may hold long conversations with him about you. I have got the promise of several votes, over and above those secured by Gilbert Burns, so that I have no doubt but he will be appointed to the office (such as it is), tho' the Town's-people are exerting themselves *to the uttermost* in behalf of a Mr. Young.

Our beloved Doctor is a Letter in my debt, which I am daily expecting him to pay. It was needless in the young man to alarm you about my health, and absurd in him to expect I should look the same in George Square as in Annandale. Let not your heart be troubled for *me*, but be careful of yourself, which is the surest way of relieving me from every species of evil I am afflicted with. The prospect of your coming to Edinburgh, does not delight me so much as it might have done; for unless my Mother alters the line of conduct which she is at present pursuing with me, I cannot suffer you to come here. But at all events, it will be a pleasure to know you near me, and perhaps we may meet in Town.

Have you written to Mrs. Montagu yet? She has been dangerously ill. Her Daughter¹ has got

¹ Mrs. B. W. Procter (wife of "Barry Cornwall").



ECCLEFECHAN

a baby. — Lockhart is going to London to be Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, with a salary of fifteen hundred a-year. — Remember me in the kindest manner to your Mother and the rest. Write as soon as ever you have leisure; and be not in wrath at this untidy epistle.

I am ever your

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 143

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 11th December, 1825.

MY DEAREST, — I found your Letter lying for me at Ecclefechan, on Monday, in the middle of rain and mist; and galloped home with it in my pocket as proud for the time being as if it had been Bish's head Prize. You are a dear good girl; and shall be happy yet, in spite of Fate itself; for I will clasp you in my arms, and my bosom shall be your home, and instead of pen and ink, your kisses and your bright black eyes shall tell me what is passing in your heart. These hopes *are* standing for us in the distance; not built on air, the baseless fabric of a vision; but founded on the solid rocks of worldly difficulty, which if we had once surmounted — ! — Pity that the path were so steep, and the distance so long! But step after step will bring one to the end of the Earth: let us never murmur; but step and step, till the toilsome pilgrimage is done, and we are safe in the promised land!

I have been as busy as might be ever since I wrote; and do not mean to stop, except forced to

do it, till the business is concluded. I have done with Musäus, having finished *Melechsala* last night, and thereby got too much of him rather than too little. At present I am undecided whether to proceed with writing his *Life*, and set the Printers to work forthwith, or in the first place to translate La Motte Fouqué's *Undine*, a task that will not occupy above eight days, but which I am not without a wish to decline altogether, seeing it has been performed already, tho', as I am told, very badly. After that, I *must* proceed northward; for my books will be exhausted; and no effectual progress will be made in getting more, I fear, till I arrive in person. On computing manuscripts last night, I was surprised to find that *two* of my three¹ volumes are almost wholly in black and white; that is the translation part of them. I wish the thing were off my hands, that I might make an effort after some undertaking of more pith and moment. Alas! The matter lies deep and crude, if it lies at all, within my soul; and much unwearied study will be called for, before I can shape it into form. Yet out it shall come, by all the powers of Dulness! And thou, my fair Guardian Saint, my kind hot-tempered Angel, my beloved scolding Wife, thou shalt help me with it, and rejoice with me in success or comfort me in failure! I do rejoice to hear you talk as you do, and as I always hoped you would, about the vulgar bubble Fame. My experience more and more confirms me in my reprobation of it as a principle of conduct; in myself it never leads to aught but selfish discontent, and distraction of the mind from the true aims of a literary aspirant. "Fame!"

¹ At a later stage it was agreed to add a *fourth* volume to "German Romance."

says my old Goethe: "as if a man had nothing else to strive for but fame! As if the attainment of harmony in his own spirit, and the right employment of his faculties, required to be varnished over by its influences on others before it could be precious to himself!" This Goethe is a wise man. These are not his words; but they express his opinion, which I joyed to find so similar to my anticipation. You are right now, and you were wrong then: therefore love me with your whole soul; and if fame come to us, it shall be welcome; if not, we care not for it, having something far more precious than it can either give or take away. O my kind Darling! I foresaw that this would be the ultimatum of your heart; but I did not dare to foresee that I should be the man on whom that noble heart would lavish all its treasures. *Ob ich Sie liebe?*¹ *Ja, ich liebe Sie ganz und ewig!* [If I love you? Yes, I love you right well and forever!]

But I am getting much too sublime; and a considerable alloy of nonsense always insinuates itself into such speculations, when I rise into the heroic mood. I must change them now for the most unheroic piece of business you can well fancy. . . .²

Now, Jane, my bonny woman, I have told thee the whole state of the case. It is not without reluc-

¹ "If he loved his Disenchantress? *Ach Gott!* His whole heart and soul and life were hers." — "Sartor Resartus," Bk. ii. ch. 5.

² A passage is here omitted, about the farm of "Shawbrae," on the Queensberry Estate, which Carlyle's brother Alick wished to rent. Miss Welsh was personally intimate with the Duke's factor, Major Crichton, and Carlyle asks her to write a word to her friend, saying simply that she knew Alexander Carlyle and believed that he would prove a good tenant. Miss Welsh entered into the business with enthusiasm; but nothing came of it: Alexander Carlyle, luckily for himself, did not get the farm.

tance that I decided on mentioning it again. It has gone thro' my head several times ; and a gentleman called Pride has been rather busy persuading me to maintain a dead silence on the subject : " Hast thou too come to asking favours ? " he says : " Thou ! Poor selfish mortal, and to use *her* kind affection for these purposes ! Go to ! Ask favours of God Almighty ; but die in the ditch, before asking them of any poor clay-tenant like thyself." These thoughts are agreeable to the natural man : but something better than Pride spake up within me and said : " And are these thy feelings towards *her* ? This stubborn attitude of self-help to her, the partner of thy inmost heart, the true sharer of all thy cares and joys, who loves thee, whom thou lovest ? She shall know this concern of thine ; and have the luxury of aiding thee if she can ; for only her ability, not her will, is doubtful." I have obeyed this latter monitor, nor shall I regret that I have done so. I have told you all : what I have written, I have written.

Now, do not vex your good heart about this matter : but consider of it, and decide according to your own judgement, secure that I shall approve of its decision, be it what it may. Can I doubt your readiness, if the rules of propriety will let you ? And is it more your interest or mine that you should not violate them ? I swear to you by the last kiss you gave me that I will love you neither more nor less, do as you may. To me there seems little hindrance ; but I feel that I have no light whatever. You know my motives and circumstances, and sympathise with me in the wish to make good to these honest-hearted friends the damage they may get by quarrelling with an unjust steward¹ on my account. If this means

¹ General Sharpe, the landlord of Hoddam Hill and Mainhill.

fail, my life must be short or extremely ineffectual should it offer me no other. Therefore heed not, my own Jane: do what your own sense directs, and count on me for seconding it. One other thing I must add: if you write, let it be *directly*. The offers are to be given in next week, and the business will be decided in a very few days after. Now *basta!* — I have filled all my paper with this prosaic affair; and I had very many savoury speculations, and much tittle-tattle to send, which must now be content to linger for another eight days. — Has Jack written to you? He says he had “a Letter from Miss Welsh, which did his heart good.” Write to me *immediately*, that is the first leisure moment you have. We *shall* and will [*word gone*].

Thine forever,

T. CARLYLE.

I have not written a word to Mrs. Montagu, but mean to do it soon. What is this of James Belial Baillie? I have had a Letter from Hamburg (from Dr. Julius whom I saw at Edinburgh in Spring) full of German criticism: it is worth little. Write me an account of your employments from sunrise to sunset; all and sundry. My Mother sends her best love: she told me the other night that she “didna ken how it was, but she thought as much about *her* as John” (the only absentee at present), which is certainly something very surprising indeed. Jane shall send you her postscript next time, and give an account of herself *if she can*; she is learning *nothing*: I see not what to do with her. Adieu, my Darling! Write soon.

LETTER 144

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 29 December, 1825.

MY DEAREST,—I must no longer postpone writing, or the fortnight will be expired, and your kind services unrepaid with even the scanty recompense of thanks. In good sooth you are a most benignant little Genius to me; and do me messages of all sorts, with the promptitude and dainty helpfulness of an Ariel. My own little Ariel! I wish I deserved you better, and could love you as I ought: you might beseem the bosom of a chivalrous Prince; and I, poor I, have neither princedom nor chivalry to share with you; “nothing but a knapsack and eighteen florins to share with anyone!”¹

You should feel some contentment with your present lot, how untoward soever in other points, for the service it enables you to do to others. There is honest James Johnstone, the most meritorious of Pedagogues; by your means he is going to be a made man. I had a Letter from him the other week, brimful of this one subject; for James is a nervous character, and longs with trembling hope to be at anchor, after his perplexed voyaging, tho’ it were in the meagre roadstead of the Haddington Parish School. He is making interest with Earls

¹ “My fever ran very high that night — her figure made sad disturbance within me — I was every moment cutting the world in two — to give her half of it — and every moment was I crying, That I had nothing but a knapsack and eighteen florins to share with her.”—Corporal Trim in “*Tristram Shandy*,” iii., 133 (ed. of 1794).

and Lords and Principalities and Powers, as Gilbert Burns directs him; and unless the Fates are more than usually shrewish, certainly "to Goodness" the honest man will reach the high top-gallant of his joy, before the close of the ensuing month. I encouraged him with a glimpse of your good deeds towards him, and wrote out a most peremptory Testimonial for his use, which indeed was nothing more than he deserved. I owe you much for these exertions in a matter so foreign to your own habits, and should not owe you less tho' the issue disappointed us.

And for this Epistle Recommendatory to *the* Major, I now heartily rejoice that I asked it of you; it will be a new tie of gratitude betwixt us; and this is not the least precious of acquisitions, tho' you cannot take it to the market, and sell it by weight or measure. . . .¹

My Mother would like to go to Shawbrae almost as well as you would do to be Queen of England; but she leaves it all "to His disposal, for what is good the Lord will give." Could she do more if crowns and sceptres were the stake? She also told me that she "kenned you would write," tho' by what magic intimations she came to ken it was not stated. The good Mother speaks of you almost daily, and loves you as truly as any other does except myself.

But I must quit my talking, for this is the last page. You will grieve, as I do, that for the last two weeks I have again been forced into idle habits. My books were all exhausted; and except writing a sorry Sketch of a Life of Musäus, I have done nothing! I should have been in Edinburgh ere now; but I dreaded the Christmas jollifications, and con-

¹ A passage chiefly about the farm of Shawbrae is here omitted.

tented myself with dispatching a portion of my Manuscript to set the Printers in motion before my arrival, which must now take place, as I reckon, early next week. This book is but a confused piece of work, and very little to my taste, after all the trouble I can take with it. Next time, — precious *next* time! What I am to do this next time, nevertheless, is still enveloped in the mantle of night. It will be long, long, before I can do my best, bad as this poor best may prove. You bid me show you all the imaginations of my heart: but some of them are much too crude for your inspection. Sometimes I almost think of asking you to wed with me as things are, and set forth by my side to — beg thro' the world, for there were little else that we could hope to do at present! On the whole, however, I am not disconsolate, or in straits about my future course. I think myself on the right way at present, whatever others think, for my health I believe is distinctly improving, and this is more to me and those that love me than mines of gold. *Patientia! Patientia!* The day *will* come, my day and yours, and we shall know what it is to be happy with such happiness as this world can give, and blessed in one another with a happiness that breathes of better worlds.

At your request I have written to the “noble lady,” a Letter full of metaphorical disclosures, truer than any she ever got from me before. Last night also I saw her son. It was my first visit to Ruthwell; where I spent a more interesting evening than had fallen to my lot for many a week, tho' it needed all my nerve to cause my Ass to be saddled and determine on the mighty enterprise. Young Montagu awoke for two moments, at sight of me, from

his usual lock-and-key condition : at meeting and at parting, he came towards me, and actually shook hands with some touch of cordiality. The boy is a curious boy : he is made of human with even some angelic materials, but they are kneaded together by the Devil. Another of Montagu's sons, I was shocked to learn, is gone deranged ! He was a kind simple soul, whom I used to see in London : another brother of his (they are both half-brothers to Monsieur Charles) has gone even a worse road in spite of all his Father could strive. The noble lady must have had wild times of it among them !

From "Julia Strachey" I hear nothing, tho' I have written to her *twice*, and spent the other night in dreaming about her and Catherine Aurora [Miss Kirkpatrick], one of the most "imaginative" dreams I have had for many a month. "O may the Devil take them both !" Soft, now, my bonny Jane, not the real Devil, the ugly black Satanas ! I declare they are very praiseworthy persons, and I love them both with a love *ganz bruderlich* [very brotherly]. So shall you too by and by *ganz schwesterlich* [very sisterly].

I long for more and more details about your studies and proceedings. Has that ugly fit of sickness *altogether* left you ? Exercise and care in regimen, I repeat it again and again, are your only safety, and at present your most imperative duty. Be sedulous in discharging it for the love of *me*, if you had no other reason ! What of your *Life* ? Shall I see it, when I come to Edinburgh ? For your Mother, do not let her unkindness afflict you : answer it by contrary conduct ; if you think it foolish and harsh, be you the more wise and gentle. This is to overcome evil with good, the only proper

weapon to resist it with. — But here comes Jean, *accincta ad scribendum* [equipt for writing]! and I must give way. [*Jean finishes the Letter, and Carlyle adds a postscript:*] If you do not write within a week, direct to Edinburgh, the Doctor's abode, 13 Hill Place. It seems likely I may leave *the Hill* on Tuesday morning, by five o'clock and intercept the Edinburgh coach at Moffat. I heard of you last night from a fair young lady, who had caught some rumour of our visit to Grange: When shall I see you, and hear of you from your own lips? *Adiez Señoretta!* — T. C.

LETTER 145

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

DAWSON'S LODGINGS, 21, SALISBURY STREET,
EDINBURGH, Saturday-afternoon, '7 Jan., 1826.'

MY DEAREST, — I have been in Town for two days,¹ and cannot rest any longer without sending you a token of my existence in your vicinity, and the constant occupation of my heart about you to whom it rightfully and more and more gladly belongs. I need not tell you that I vehemently wish for some tidings of you, and still more for another sight of your kind countenance, the fairest object that for me this Universe holds in its domain. It seems almost an *æon* since I heard of you, tho' on reckoning by the vulgar arithmetic of this Earth, I find that it is little more than a fortnight. Do write the first hour you have leisure, and tell me all

¹ Carlyle arrived in Edinburgh on Thursday evening, the 5th of January.

and everything; how your health is; what you do or think in this wild furious weather; and whether you still love me, or have at length opened your ear to Prudence, and determined on expelling me from my Elysian haven in your breast, to go and seek shelter in some meaner harbour. If you do, you little Gypsy, I will — die? — no, not die; but come and raise such a hurricane of tempestuous eloquence about your ears, that you shall be glad to let me in again for peace's sake. So mind never once to think of it.

After all, are you got well again, and cheerful or at least composed in spirits? Alas, my poor Jane! that she should have to battle with the dire fiends of Pain, and bend her neck to their crushing influences! But it shall not always be so: when we get together into our "eight-day-clock" routine, both of us will be happy and active and *alive* like the other children of men. O! that *were* existence; a new birth into a freer and brighter world, of which this is but the dull proscenium! Would that the days were here; would that we had patience to struggle for the hastening of them or to wait for their arrival.

But when am I to see you? I do not wish to visit Haddington in the present aspect of affairs; I should give little pleasure and get little. Yet it does seem hard that I cannot see my own little kind-hearted *Weibchen*, and she within two hours' travel of me. It is very hard. Nevertheless I will not aggravate your share of the evil by loading you with mine. Do even as it shall seem thee good, my own Darling; and I shall be ready to obey. Jack says you told him you would be in Edinburgh shortly after the Newyear began. It is begun now.

This Book *Undine*¹ is worth little to you ; yet I will wish you to read it and tell me honestly what you think of it, for I have some purpose of introducing it into our Collection, as a specimen of his Baronship. Scarcely half of the Tale is there, but if you care for it, I will send the whole when you return this. Or if you are engaged otherwise, or unable or disinclined for the task, throw this linsey-wolsey volume on the shelf, and think that it has already done sufficient duty, by officiating as the messenger between two such worthy souls as you and your future Helper. I know not how it is ; but I fear you are not well ; and I shall long to hear from you, and speak to you ; for tho' these suspicions may be light as wind, they have a weight in the imagination which no logic can take from them. Therefore be kind to *Undine*, and write to me as she bids you.

I have also sent you Mrs. Strachey's Letter, the *naïveté* of which may amuse you, the truth and fervent simplicity of which would interest you if you knew the writer. Do you really think I love that lady *much* more than I love you ? That were a joke indeed !

The Printers are at work today : I will send you a copy of the first sheet whenever it is thrown off, —perhaps towards the end of next week. Tait, the Bookseller, is writing to Germany for more matter : I expect to be very busy for the next three months. I pray Heaven the thing were off my hands ; for it is a sorry piece of work at the best, and written nearly altogether for the "lucre of gain."

Will you write to my Mother ? She wishes it

¹ By Baron de la Motte Fouqué. "Undine" was published in 1811, and is very generally considered the author's masterpiece.

earnestly. Will you write to me "very instantly," and love me all the days of your life? I am too long here, for the hour is come. God bless you, *mein Herzenskind!* I am yours forever,

T. CARLYLE.

Jack, who is living with me here, sends his kindest regards: it seems he has written to you already.

LETTER 146

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

21, Salisbury Street, Saturday, '14 January, 1826.'

BEST AND DEAREST, — I have literally only two or three minutes, which I can abstract from a host of stupid and perplexing avocations that beset me; nevertheless your looking westward this day shall not be *utterly* in vain; I will send you three lines to say that I am still alive, and still yours, and you still mine, forever and ever. Oh my kind Jane! Why cannot I fly to *yourself* and tell you this! And clasp you in my arms, and swear that nothing earthly or unearthly shall ever divide us! But it is vain "to kick against the pricks": let me be patient.

I knew you would write to me on Monday, and I was not disappointed. Your Letter¹ was handed in to me in the evening, along with one from Mrs. Montagu, which had picked it up by the way. Do you think I was such a fool as to read yours *first*? What will you wager that I was? I send you the "noble lady's" Letter, for your recreation,

¹ This Letter has not been preserved.

and to quicken you in her service, in which it would appear you are at present behind-hand. Nothing can bring her out of the *ideal*: she is a born *Dichterinn*.

I also send you the first two sheets of that Book, which is giving me such trouble: I wish to Heaven it were off my hands; for there is much more cry than wool in the whole affair. I walked yesterday from eleven o'clock till four, seeking books and men to expedite the concern; the Bibliopolist himself, a Turk-in-grain, being also very stupid, and inexpert in devising ways and means, tho' willing, poor profit-and-loss unit, to do the best he can. The second sheet is full of blunders, never having got the smallest correction since it went to press, or rather since it was shoved into my drawer with its fellows, some night in October at home.

You are not to be here till next month, and I must not think of coming out to see you? Good Heavens! I must leave Town in a few days; by the middle of next month I expect to be sitting at my own fireside in Annandale, eighty good miles from Edinburgh! Hard! It is unspeakable! When I think of it I could find in my heart to drop a bitter tear, a tear of indignant sorrow at the perverseness of things. Are you not mine, my own chosen only Darling of my soul? And I must not see you? Must not—Peace! Peace! Where is the use of brawling: we *cannot* help it, and must teach ourselves to bend to it submissively. I could walk to Haddington to see you for ten minutes. But I yield implicitly and trustfully to your arrangements: I know your feeling on the subject is like my own. So God bless you my

best-beloved! Tho' I cannot see you, none can hinder me from thinking of you, and anticipating the day when we shall no more be separated. O why did you join yourself with *me*? I declare I could sometimes weep for you; tho' I love you as my own soul.

The day of my departure is not fixed yet; but I have already been too long here. The last sound sleep I got was in my own bed at Hoddam Hill: three months of Edinburgh lodgings would drive me to the verge of the churchyard. These are things not to be sighed over, but to be remedied. What do you think I am meditating? To rent me a cottage in the middle of a walled garden, if I can find one, in the neighbourhood of this City, and—bring my Sisters Mary and Jane to keep it for me! If they do not get Shawbrae, I shall have a house to provide at anyrate: for tho' I should live in a place no bigger or better than a hencoop, it shall be *my own* from the threshold to the roof-tree, and the curse of the abomination of tumult and smoke shall be shut out from it. Or would you—?—But no! You shall not: I love you, and will not make you miserable.

Professor Leslie has another plan. This tun-bellied Philosopher met me on the North-bridge the other day, and wished me in the first place to write a Prize Essay on Comets for a gold medal and fifty guineas, which he had got to dispose of in that way; a thing which I signified was a good way from my thoughts at that date: and in the second place to go to Munich (in Bavaria) with a German Potentate, who wishes to be instructed in English Literature and Science, and is a courtier and apparently “a very good kind of a man.” On

this subject, I told the Mathematician, I was ready to talk further, if the German Potentate inclined, and give him my decision when I heard his terms. Since then I have heard nothing; and very probably shall never hear anything. At all events I durst bet a thousand to one that I should *not* go and teach this German Potentate English Literature and Science. We must *take up house*, Jane, at no distant date in some way or other!

Will you write again on Monday at great very great length: I will send you another Letter before I leave this City, be that when it may. Indeed I have still many things to do; biographical notices to collect from the Advocates' Library, books to gather, arrangements to complete. I would they were over and I home. The printing will proceed as at present; and fresh books are written for from Leipzig. Write to me my Darling: I have no friend but thee. Write all that is in thy true heart. I am forever thine,

T. CARLYLE.

I make no excuse for this coarsest of Letters. Its appearance makes its apology; and I know well it will be welcome where it is going. On Monday!

LETTER 147

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Edinburgh

HADDINGTON, Sunday, '15 January, 1826.'

MY DEAREST,—The announcement contained in your last Letter bewildered my intellect to such a degree that I should hardly, I believe, have

minded the injunction to write on Monday, were it not that I want your immediate counsel on a no less important subject than the affair of Shawbrae. . . .¹

Last night I had serious thoughts of setting out for Edinburgh forthwith, in spite of all and sundry objections. I felt as if it would do me a world of good just to fall upon your neck and weep, and tell you once more what I have told you so often already, that you are dearer to me than aught on earth. But it must not be! Things are bad enough already; I must not make them worse, if I can help it. And you will return ere long to take up house, *with Mary and Jane*, in the middle of a walled garden? Indeed you will do no such thing; for this project you will find, on reflection, to be none of the wisest. The Bavaria one pleases me just as little, unless the German Potentate would find room in his establishment for me also. Otherwise, you may tell Mr. Leslie, if he says any more on the subject, that you have got a Wife to take care of at home. Meanwhile she must take care of herself, and close her Letter, short as it is, and go to bed, for her head is aching beyond all bearing. God bless you. I will write at *very great length* some other time.

I am forever yours,

JANE B. WELSH.

My kind love to John. The Schoolmaster affair is looking rather more promising again. Lord Wemyss, to save his conscience, is not to vote at all; and there is some hope that Mr. Fletcher will either do the same, or vote as we wish.

¹ About Shawbrae omitted.

LETTER 148

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

21, SALISBURY STREET, Tuesday, '17 January, 1826.'

MY DEAREST, — Your Letter of yesterday threw me, for some minutes, into no small perplexity. [*Here follow two pages or so, about the farm of Shawbrae.*]

I make no excuses and feel no "shame" for troubling you in this way: I can hardly even "regret" that you are getting so many stupid commissions on my account. For it is on *my* account; and I am yours, and you are my little *Brautchen*, and a part of myself, and I love you — very considerably.

The plan of taking up house in the vicinity of Edinburgh has not left me, nor does it seem so foolish as you appear to think it. I must and will have shelter from the horrors of Edinburgh lodgings; and unless my scale of expenses be graduated on the minutest principle, I am like to find it in an Edinburgh jail. Can *you* suffer poverty? Do you know what it means? It is a word of three syllables, easily written, and looks romantic when spoken by the side of household love. Alas! alas! the bearing of it is a different matter. For myself I am happy, and *rich* in the midst of it; but you, my poor Jane, would die before you learned this wisdom as I have had to learn it. There are many miracles in this world: but for a woman to descend from superfluity¹ to live with a sick ill-natured man

¹ There might have been superfluity (in a restricted sense), had Dr. Welsh lived and prospered; but as it was there was real need

in poverty, and not in wretchedness, would be the greatest miracle of all. But I will tell you about this at large some other day. For the present it is but diverting you from your appointment. Tomorrow I expect to hear. Rich or poor, sick or well, you have me altogether and forever.

T. CARLYLE.

The Pedagogue Johnstone will prosper after all. Long life to you my kind Ariel, for such you are in spite of Fate!

LETTER 149

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

EDINBURGH, 21st January, 1826.

LIEBSTES WEIBCHEN, — I cannot but regret that you have had such a poor pennyworth in me of late: I have never had it in my power to write to you with the smallest portion of deliberation; and what I have written, in the midst of bustle and perplexity, has been nothing but a series of commissions involving you in toil and trouble. My good kind Jane! I do wonder at your patience and long-suffering; at the unwearied love and helpfulness with which you meet me in all the purposes that it enters into my heart to imagine. I have not found such Faith; no not in Israel. But it shall all be rewarded, if Fortune be not *too* hard a Mistress, and

for economy in Mrs. Welsh's household management. Carlyle, if he thought of the matter at all, seems to have been unaware of Mrs. Welsh's difficulties in making ends meet, in her altered circumstances.

my life more implicated and perverse than I have reason to expect. O Jane! I will love thee as thou wert never loved: I feel it in my secret heart that thou art dear to me beyond the utterance of words, that we are bound together by invisible ties, and cords of inmost affection stronger than the arrows of Death! No, *Liebchen*, there is nothing that shall part us: for thou lovest me, and thou art worthy the devotion of an undivided soul, and there is a soul which shall yet be thine in all its entireness.

Monday (23). — So far had I written on Saturday-afternoon, in the full faith that my words would reach your ear that night, when a “Curious Impertinent” knocked at my door, and favoured me with a transition into quite a new set of ideas. I was still in hope that I might get the man despatched in time; but just as the ceremony was concluding, who should enter but your famous Pedagogue James Johnstone from Broughty Ferry! Of course all thought of writing was banished for the day; and it is not till this moment, such has been the empty bustle round me, that I have got an hour’s composure to conclude my Letter. James is off to Haddington, to drink tea with *you* this evening! *He*, not *I*! My heart is rather sad; but we shall say no more of it.

I meant to tell you that your punctuality in the affair of Major Crichton was not in vain: . . . I owe you much for the spirit of devotedness which you have shown me in this small concern: *the Duke* has no farm or class of farms in his possession which I would accept in exchange for my glorious lordship in your bosom; he has not, and will never have, so precious an inheritance, tho’ all his manors were enlarged a thousandfold. O Jane, why do I mur-

mur at my Destiny ! It is no girl's-fondness that irradiates my path with false and transient splendour : it is the calm deliberate love of a noble-minded woman that has given her generous self to me without reserve, the influences of whose fair spirit shine over my life with the warmth and light of a mild May Sun. And I complain, and call myself unhappy ! Shame on me for a discontented misanthrope !

On the whole I do not mean to *weep* much more over you ; but to try what I can do to help you, and make the most for you, of your bad bargain. I feel more and more the need for both of us of being mingled with the current of human business : of being united in the eye of God and man, and beginning a new life in each other's arms. Who knows but by this time twelvemonth we may be married ! Married !—and Jane shall be mine, and I shall be hers and not another's,¹ and the soft breath of wedded love shall shed its balm over us, and refresh the thirsty desert of existence into fragrance and verdure as of Heaven ! My kind little *Töchterchen* ! And you will scold me, and quarrel with me, and then kiss me into peace ; and be my true Wife, and attend me in my pilgrimage thro' height and depth, and take poverty with me, before wealth and honour with another ! But is it really so ? Or is it only opposition that excites you, that you [think] a union with me precious because it seems difficult of attainment ? If I were to become happy and a Seladon, would you become a coy Phillis ?

¹ “Him had I chosen from all others,
His would I be, and not another's ;
To me his love was all in all.”

“Meister's Apprenticeship,” Bk. vi.

Indeed you would not : you are mine thro' good report and bad report ; and you have loved me with a noble trust, which might make you worthy of the best on Earth, and which my poor fortunes cannot diminish or increase.

But I must descend from the heights of sentiment into the level of sense, and tell you what I mean to *do* for realizing all these glories. Something I must and will do ; and that without undue loitering. Of late I have been meditating more intently than ever the project of that Literary Newspaper. Brewster is still full of it, so is the Bookseller Tait : I myself think it would pay well, but the labour is tremendous. Brewster, it seems, had engaged Lockhart to take a third share in it along with him and me ; in which case, I should have closed with the proposal without hesitation. Now Lockhart's preferment¹ has overturned all that, and the matter rests where it was. I view it with wavering feelings, in which on the whole hope and desire predominate. As to the nature of the business, it may be honourable or base according to the nature of its accomplishment. Did not the great Schlegel edit a Literary Newspaper at Jena ? Did not Wieland and Schiller at Weimar ? By and by the business would get lighter, and I should get help in carrying it on, and find leisure for more permanent and weighty undertakings. Brewster would have it begun at Whitsunday or next November : in either case I should have to live in this vicinity, in my own hired house. Twice have I actually been out spying the aspects of the country ; it is not an hour since I returned from Morningside, where there are houses in plenty of every quality. My plan would be to take a

¹ See *ante*, Letter 142.

small one; bring in Mary and Jane to keep it for me, till I saw the promise of our enterprise, and then bring in —— if she would come! Would she? How do you like this form of action? Give me all your criticisms without stint or reservation. It is right that we should both be satisfied, for it is strictly an affair of the *Common-weal*. Poor old Common-weal! It is pity that it should not flourish better: but we will manage it and force it to flourish.

At present I am sicker than usual, and must not think of staying here. Will you write to me, before I go, *ein langes und breites*? I talk of setting off on Thursday-morning: perhaps it may be Friday; for I should like to see the termination of the Schoolmaster concern before I went. Honest James must surely prosper: he is grown five years older since I saw him last Spring; for “care sits on his faded cheek,” and the world is to him a *fremmt* [strange, foreign] abode. Write largely in the interim, if you have any time; if not I shall be patient as possible. Have you written to my Mother at the Hill? In your own good time. Alick sent me some kind thanks to you, the terms of which I have forgot, the spirit of them you can easily figure.

The other day I was walking along Princes Street in company with Dr. Brewster, and saw Eliza Stodart’s kind face as she was turning up a cross street. She evidently noticed me, and was pointing me out to another young lady who was holding by her arm. I turned away my eyes; for the pressure of etiquette was too heavy for me to bear. Tell Eliza that I saluted her in my heart, and wished her all good things; and if you like you may give her a kiss in my name, and I will pay you at the rate of two

thousand per cent on sight. This is a fair trade is it not?

My sheet is done, and the hour of four is just at hand. Tonight I have to write to Goethe, and send him the copy of *Schiller* by a person that is going to London. Therefore I must on all accounts have done. — There is nothing but bankruptcy going on here. Constable the huge Bookseller has failed; then Ballantyne (my present Printer); and today Sir Walter Scott. Sir Walter was deeply involved with both: his debt is said to be £60,000; and it seems he takes it heavily to heart; is fallen sick and gone to bed and refuses to be comforted. *O curas hominum! O quantum est in rebus inane!*¹ [O cares of men! O what emptiness there is in human affairs!] Now, write like a good lassie, and “tell us all you know.”²

Are you got well again? Or is the headache still perplexing you. I shall never forgive myself if I have made you worse. But you must and shall get well; for you are mine, and I would not give you for the Universe. God keep us both!

I am yours forever and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 150

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Edinburgh

‘HADDINGTON, 25th January, 1826.’

HERE are Letters³ for your Mother and Jane, but none, my Beloved, for you. Your last deserves a

¹ PERSIUS, “Sat.,” I, 1.

² See Appendix A, No. 11.

³ One of these (to Carlyle’s mother) is printed in the “New Letters and Memorials,” i. 14.

fuller and more deliberate answer than I have yet had leisure to give it, as for some days and *nights* past I have been wholly occupied about the momentous *election*; and this morning I feel spiritless and worn out to the last degree, much more inclined to sleep than to write. But you shall have a long Letter from me presently, at the Hill. In the meantime, taking it for granted that you have not left Edinburgh,¹ I send the rest of my commands for Annandale, which in the bustle of yesterday I was prevented from getting ready to go along with James Johnstone. He is a worthy creature that, as ever I saw, but O, far too nervous for this world! He had nearly given up the ghost under the operations of examination. The hard and stony hearts of all present were melted at his state.

Carry my most affectionate regards to all your people, and a Sister's kiss to my dear Child. Say to Alick, that if good wishes were farms, he would not be long without one. — Farewell, my own Brother, or Husband, if you like that better. I live in the hope of your speedy return, when perhaps you will find things wearing a more prosperous aspect. Yesterday when I was packing up your Mother's caps, *my* Mother with a sort of half-kind air, brought me a little handkerchief and said, "You may put in that, if you choose, for Jane." You may believe I thanked her with all my heart for this small mercy, and hailed it as an indication of returning goodhumour, with great joy. — Oh yes, Love, all will come right in process of time; — only I am afraid we shall die in the interim. — God bless

¹ Carlyle left Edinburgh for Hoddam Hill on Friday, 27th of January.

you, at all events. Expect to hear from me very soon.

Yours wholly and forever,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 151

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, Tuesday, '31 January, 1826.'

[Post-mark, 1 Feb. '26.]

MY DEAREST, — You are now, I suppose, sitting in peace and quietness within your own four walls, waiting patiently for the promised long broad Letter that became due to you last week. And far be it from me to disappoint you in any such most reasonable expectation, particularly since two nights of sound sleep have left me no sort of apology for a longer delay.

I declare I hardly know whether to laugh or to weep over this last act of our drama; it appears altogether so tragi-comic, now that one has leisure to think. Ever since our sorrowful parting upon the highway,¹ I had looked forward to your arrival in Edinburgh as the next epoch of hope; and not doubting but I should find you there any time for a month, graciously accepted an invitation from the hatefulest family of my acquaintance. All for nothing, since the prospect of meeting you is vanished like unto Adonis's Gardens, and the "wine of wormwood" remains to be swallowed undisguised by any morsel of sweet. To complete the business,

¹ Near Templand. — See *ante*, Letter 138.

no sooner are eighty good miles betwixt us than my Mother becomes the very best, reasonablest Mother alive. The little present to Jane, and her great kindness to James Johnstone, had already led me to prognosticate fair weather; but now I am actually basking in the April sunshine of her smiles; — a change wonderfully refreshing after the tremendous phenomena that preceded it. Last night we were positively confidential. She was inveighing against Haddington, and asked me flatly if I should have any objection to leave it. None, I told her; I had already been here too long. She then questioned me about where I should like best to fix my abode; and this called forth a *speech* the longest, I think, I ever made in my life. All places, I told her, were alike indifferent to me, so long as *you* had no settled habitation. Wherefore she need have no sort of scruple about pleasing herself, and taking up house, as she wished, in Dumfriesshire:¹ only in case of *your* settling in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, as you were at present half-determined, and being some way enabled by the blessing of Heaven to make a livelihood for two, it would not be worth while perhaps that we should make any intermediate change. “I say *we*,” I added, “because wheresoever it is appointed *me* to live, you cannot surely intend we should ever live asunder.” At this she burst into tears, and exclaimed, throwing her arms about my neck, “why have you never said as much before?” Our dialogue was long and interesting; the result of it a prospectus for a “Joint-stock Company” such as it hath never yet entered man’s heart to conceive, and which I hereby submit to you for

¹ At Templand, with her aged father and invalid sister, Jeannie Welsh.

your mature deliberation as a party concerned. *Hé bien !* You are to hire the said nice little house, by all manner of means, and next November¹ we are to — hire one within some dozen yards of it !! so that we may all live together like one Family until such time as we are married, and after [*sic*]. I had infinite trouble in bringing my Mother to give ear to this magnificent project. She was clear for giving up fortune, house-gear, everything to you and I [*sic*], and going to live with my poor old Grandfather at Templand; but my arguments, prayers, tears and kisses at length got a promise from her that she would do exactly as I pleased. And my pleasure is to live with you in poverty all the days of my life sooner than encroach in the smallest degree on *her* independence. No! God forbid! What sort of happiness could I expect, even in your arms, were I conscious of having failed in the first duty of my life? Whatever comes of it, then, my Mother must keep my fortune, or else she must keep myself. But how do you relish my plan? Should you not like to have such agreeable neighbours? We would walk together every day, and you would come and take tea with us at nights. To *me* it seems as if the Kingdom of Heaven were at hand.

As for the Literary Newspaper, so that it does not hurt your health, it is perhaps better than *farming* after all. One part of your scheme however, I cannot possibly approve, which is, bringing in your young Sisters to keep your house. Indeed my Darling, they would make but sorry housewives, in a situation so new and strange; and you, with all your

¹ The 28th of November is one of the two Term-days for removals in Scotland.

kindness and wisdom, would make a still sorrier *Mother*. Whatever you do, never think of carrying off Jane. *She* is my child, and shall go no such road, till I am there to guard her. Of this you may rest assured.—Any news of Shawbrae? Tell me presently. I have not said a hundredth part of *what I know*, and yet my paper is nearly filled. Attribute my dulness to partial intoxication: I drink strong ale at present to make me sleep, and it operates by making me in the first place tipsy. Write, write. My kind love to your Mother and all the rest. “Would I come?” Certainly not.

Yours *auf ewig*,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 152

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

Hoddam Hill, Sunday, ‘5 February, 1826.’

[By Postmark]

MY DEAREST, — I love you too well to put you on exercising your patience for another week; and unless I write today, that must inevitably be your fate. I am busy as ever man was at present; and have no hope of being otherwise for the next four months. The people have agreed on adding a *fourth* volume to their book; the printers are chasing me like greyhounds; so from dawn till dewy eve, and often till rainy midnight, I am kept in a perpetual flurry. Writing, riding, walking or smoking, there is no moment of my waking hours unoccupied. This very day I have retouched a Sketch of La Motte Fouqué, which I expected to be

dunned for tomorrow; retouched it, alas! in time stolen from Divine Service; and thro' virtue of the same pious sacrilege, I am now writing to Miss Jane. In addition to all this, the present day is a *solemn fast* with me; not on religious, but on dietetic principles: therefore you need look for nothing from me but haste, acerbity and *Tartareanism*.

The business of Shawbrae is over. Alick sent off his Letter as I directed, and next day, was informed—that the farm had been appointed to another. . . .

And now, my own Jane, accept anew my gratitude, and that of all my kindred, for your prompt and warm kindness: you merit it and have it the more that you have not prospered, that you have had to encounter both the trouble and the disappointment. I am sure as if I saw it, that you feel five hundred times more grief on the occasion than any other party concerned. In good truth, I know not myself whether it is a loss or not. Alick was all along of opinion that they had offered too much rent for the place; and the late fluctuations in the market had even considerably cooled the ardour of my Father who is a much more imaginative character. All hands in the long run composed themselves without effort to wish joy of his prize to the Agriculturalist who has got it;—a man they thought much better meriting to be ruined or reduced to straits than they. My Mother bids me *thank* you, with a tone of double emphasis in her voice: she was dreadfully frightened at the Letter I sent, with a hired messenger from the Post-office, and “haste” on the back of it; Jack’s approaching dissolution or yours or mine, or the general overturn of the Presbyterian Establishment seemed the



SCOTSBRIG HOMESTEAD

least that it could forebode ; and when Jane and she, the only parties at home, succeeded in deciphering the sheet, and found in it nothing but the loss of a paltry farm, they lifted up their voices in a chorus of glad derision, valuing not only all "the Duke's land" but "all the land the *lift* covers," at a sum not exceeding the moderate charge of three farthings.

For the rest, "hope springs eternal in the human breast."¹ My Father is now bearing with crowded sails on a place called Scotsbrig ; a finer farm he thinks than even Shawbrae, and to be had at a much lower rent. Another Carlyle² of this neighbourhood, acquainted with the proprietor (or rather possessor of it ; for it belongs to the mad Hoggan of Waterside in Nithsdale, but debt excludes him forever from any voice in the disposal of it) has volunteered to recommend him, and become his surety if any were required ; and all are at present waiting for the issue. There, if they prosper, it is probable enough I may spend the summer. And at last—enough, and more than enough of me and my acres !

You may believe I heartily rejoice in your reconciliation with your Mother ; and pray that it may be permanent and cordial. It is so delightful a thing to live in unity with all men, especially with those near and dear to us, that hardly any price is too high to pay for it. It will be your effort, I doubt not, to profit by this fair season, for convinc-

¹ POPE's "Essay on Man," Epis. I. 95.

² James Carlyle's cousin Robert, of Waterbeck, "who," says Carlyle in a Letter to his brother John, "has recommended our husbandmen in the handsomest manner ; nay, has even volunteered to become their caution for the first three years."

ing your Mother that she does you wrong in thinking that you do not love her as you ought; and me too, in thinking that I ever wish or can wish to abridge by one hair's breadth her right either to her own fortune or to my regard. It is a pity that she does not, and never will, do me even the slight credit to which I think I can lay claim; but it is just so much the more pressingly my duty in that case to avoid the error which I regret in her, and to suffer no poor selfish feeling to alter the calm estimate of my mind regarding her. My deliberate opinion is that she will *never* like me or find any pleasure in me; that it will be her wisdom therefore, and yours also, to keep me far from her; as it will be mine to endeavour at all times to act and feel towards her as to the virtuous, affectionate, honourable-minded, tho' with me unsympathising Mother of my Jane. You did right, stoutly and peremptorily to put an end to all that about surrendering of houses and fortunes and so forth. I hope we shall hear no more of that affair. Does your Mother think it possible that I should not agree with you to the very heart in that determination? That if I loved her I should wish to interfere with her comforts for the sake of Bank-notes and mahogany furniture, neither of which I need? *Almächtiger Gott!* Or that if I did *not* love her, I should be a whit nearer wishing it?

What a bright project you have formed! Matured in a single night, like *Jack's Bean* in the Nursery Tale, and with houses in it too! Ah, Jane, Jane! I fear it will never answer half so well in practice as [it] does on paper. It is impossible for two households to live as if they were one; doubly impossible (if there were degrees of impossi-

bility) in the present circumstances. I shall never get any enjoyment of your company till you are all my own. How often have you seen me with pleasure in the presence of others? How often with positive dissatisfaction? For your own sake I should rejoice to learn that you were settled in Edinburgh; a scene much fitter for you than your present one: but I had rather that it were with *me* than with any other. Are you sure that the number of *parties* and formal visitors would be diminished in number or bettered in quality, according to the present scheme? My very heart also sickens at these things: the moment I am master of a house, the first use I turn it to will be to slam the door of it on the face of nauseous intrusions¹ of all sorts which it can exclude; my prospective cottage would be calculated for different objects than your Mother's. O the hardness and inductility of earthly things! O the speed of Will compared with that of Power! Better to break the leg of Will than poor Power may not lose sight of it altogether. My Will for the present, is crushed and fractured till honest Power has even to take it by the arm and lug it along. I find myself wonderfully happier.

These are my first crude thoughts on the business: if you are *serious* in your intention, I shall willingly resume them and may perhaps find many things to alter. After all what is my concurrence? Cannot you settle in Edinburgh, and I no whit the wiser? Do you doubt that I should rejoice to see you there, tho' I had you to myself only for a minute in the week? Come, if your Mother will take charge of it; only let *her*, not *you*, for fear of after-

¹ Carlyle's biographer altered this word to "intruders." Froude's "Life," i. 337.

claps. I wish from my soul you were out of Haddington. I wish from my soul, your hand were in mine, and we married in the eye of Heaven and Earth. —

Yours forever.

T. CARLYLE.

James Johnstone was staying with Jonathan when I left Edinburgh that Friday. His youth seemed to be renewed, even as the Eagle's age, by his success in that "election." You ought to rejoice in the good you have done; and I will thank you as long as I live.

Jane, I suppose, purposes inditing a Letter to your Mother for her kind and much respected present. I gave Jenny sixpence as she stood by, to prevent her dying of hidden chagrin: she is a kind-hearted little creature, and I could not bear the melancholy patience of her "eagle eye." My Mother "kens not *what* to say": the caps are transcendental caps, worthy to be worn by queens or queen-like figures, and *she* has nothing to give you for them but *love*, a draft on the Bank of Faith which I am sure you will endorse. The darned cap,¹ it appears, is much better for the *rent*.

Brewster sends me no tidings of his Newspaper; from which I infer that he has *not* succeeded in inducing Professor Wilson to join in the speculation, as he intended trying to do when I left him. *Tant mieux!* The Country is my place in Summer.

¹ See "New Letters and Memorials," i. 16.

LETTER 153

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, Tuesday, '21st February, 1826.'

MY DEAREST,—I have set you a dangerous example this time, which, I trust, you will be humane enough not to imitate. And, believe me, it is no symptom of declining grace that I have made you wait beyond the appointed term; well knowing how much anxiety the omission was likely to occasion you: for the truth of the matter (tho' I am ashamed to be always harping on the same string) is just that I have had another illness, and could not in consequence, write so soon as I wished.

The Doctor would probably tell you of my "weaver-shuttle" expedition into Edinburgh; and probably too, thro' his Doctorial skill, predict the consequences of it. As was to be expected, I have never had a day to do well in since, but have for the most part lain in bed, considerably more dead than alive. Yet *console toi*, my Beloved, for the worst is now certainly over; and I will take heed how I endanger a life that is yours, another time.

"Well! and what, will you tell me, took you to Edinburgh at all, when to your certain knowledge I had been gone two weeks?" You may well ask what. The inducement then,—that is the ostensible inducement,—was to call for Mrs. Crichton, whom indisposition prevented from coming hither. But besides this, I had a fancy to see our Brother

John, the next best sight in the world after yourself; and to give directions about — a gold ring, no less! with a little heart on it of hair. “Whose hair? Another Lancer’s?” No! God forbid! I am done with Lancers.

And you really are not transported beyond measure at my project? Was ever mortal so difficult to please? He needs only to allow me the ground to build on, and I raise him up the most magnificent Castle, — fast as thought! But, Oh mercy, what ground! It reminds me of the large whale, on which Crusoe’s or Gulliver’s, or somebody’s ship cast anchor;¹ no sooner have I erected my superstructure on the supposed terra firma than it makes a movement, and the whole concern is a heap of ruins! Seriously,² Dearest, you are the most tantalizing man in the world; and I the most tractable woman. This time twelvemonth nothing would content you but to live in the Country; and tho’ a Country-life, Heaven knows, never before attracted my desires, it nevertheless became *my* choice the instant it seemed to be *yours*. In truth I discovered a hundred beauties and proprieties in it which had hitherto escaped my notice; and it came at last to this, that every imagination of the thoughts of my heart was, “love in a cottage,” continually. *Hé bien!* And what then? A change came o’er the spirit of your dream; while the bees are yet humming, the roses blooming, the small birds rejoicing, and everything in summer-glory about our ideal cottage, I am called away to live *in prospectu* in a very different scene

¹ It was Sindbad’s ship. See his First Voyage, in the “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments.”

² Mr. Froude changes “seriously” to “surely.” — “Life,” i. 338.

amid the smoke and bustle and icy coldness of Edinburgh, — prosaic, money-making Edinburgh. Now, this I call a trial of patience and obedience. And say, could I have complied more readily tho' I had been your wedded Wife twelve times over? Without a moment's hesitation, without once looking behind, without even bidding adieu to my flowers, I took my way with you out of one Paradise to raise another in the howling wilderness — a labour which could not have been effected, under all the circumstances, by anything less than a miracle of love. Oh mind of man! And "this too must pass away!" Houses, walled gardens, conversaziones and all the rest of it, pass away like the baseless fabric of a vision; and lo! we are once more a solitary homeless pair, — "the world all before us where to choose our place of rest!"¹ — Be Providence our guide! — Suppose we take different roads, and try how that answers. There is Catherina Aurora Kirkpatrick, for instance, who has fifty thousand pounds, and a princely lineage, and "never was out of humour in her life." With such "a singularly pleasing creature" and so much fine gold, you could hardly fail to find yourself admirably well off. While I, on the other hand, might better my fortunes in many quarters: a certain handsome stammering Englishman I know of would give his ears to carry me away South with him; my second Cousin, too, the Doctor at Leed, has set up a fine establishment and writes to me

¹ "The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way."

"Paradise Lost," Bk. xii. 646-9.

that I am "the very first of my sex"; or, nearer home, I have an interesting young Widower in view, who has no scruples about making me Mother to his three small children, Bluestocking tho' I be. — But what am I talking about? as if we were not already married, — alas, married past redemption! God knows, in that case, what is to become of us! At times I am so disheartened that I sit down and weep; and then at other times! Oh Heavens!

I had learned the loss of Shawbrae before I got your Letter; but not the Major's remarkable excuse. . . .

What has become of Jane's epistle? I prepared my Mother for the honour which awaited her, and she seemed not a little flattered by it. — This is an ill-looking Letter, Dear, as ever I wrote; but I could make no more of it in my present posture; for, like our Orator in the hour and power of music, I am laid at length on a sofa, practising what I have long learnt, — to rest! Write instantly, will you? and tell me all about your tasks. John sent me the first half of *Libussa*, which I think much better done than *Dumb Love*. What impudence! God bless you, my Darling. I am yours forever,

JANE B. WELSH.

LETTER 154

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 26 February, 1826.

MY DEAREST, — I received your Letter on Friday, after asking for it many times in vain. The

cause of your unwonted silence afflicts me doubly, as it came unexpected; John told me he had seen you in Edinburgh, and that you were "in good health." Alas, my good kind Jane! It is a hard fate for thee to lie in prison in a sick frame, with little entertainment for thy vehement spirit but doleful meditations on the gross folly and perverseness of the man thou has loved above all others. I grieve that I cannot better it; for in all likelihood this Letter will at first vex you still more; yet, on more serious reflexion, I hope it will not fail to produce some peaceable fruit.

I have already noticed oftener than once that in unguarded moments you let indications escape you of a judgement existing in the bottom of your mind by no means favourable to my present walk and conversation. You seem in your secret soul to think that I am but a whimsical unstable person, that I might do well if I liked, that my chief distress at present is idleness and a diseased imagination. To these criticisms of "good-natured friends" I am already so much accustomed that I can estimate them in my own mind at something like their just value; but from you, I will confess it, they affect me with a sharp distress. When my heart is opening towards you in trustful Husband-like communion, they shut it with a harsh hostile violence; I thought we were *one*, and I find that we are still *two*; that far from sympathising with me, by helpful encouragement, in my great enterprise (and every man's enterprise appears great in his own little eyes) you scarcely approve of it, you do not even seem to know with any accuracy what it is. Allow me to speak in all plainness; for there are many mistakes here.

I can by no means engage, in the space of one short Letter, to vindicate the whole course of my late history; but so much I may say in clear words: that I do in no wise accuse myself of fluctuations and change of purpose; that on the contrary ever since I became master of my own movements I seem to have walked forward in one path with more and more steadiness; and can even tell myself at some moments that I am distinctly advancing towards my highest and most desirable objects, and in spite of all impediments, and well or ill meant counter advices, shaping my own dismembered life again into a whole; by means of my own; peculiar as the case they were to meet is peculiar. A little more than a twelvemonth ago, when it had become too apparent to be longer denied that unless I could devise for myself a more self-regulated existence I must soon sink to utter destruction both of soul and body; having at last acquired calmness and seclusion for meditating the aspect of my shipwrecked fortune, I first bethought me of *you* as of one to whom I was dearer than to almost any other; and with such knowledge as I had of your circumstances and intentions, I called on you for help in my extreme need. Your love of me, I knew, was great, your nobleness of mind I had also reason to know; and the sacrifice I required of you was such as to put both to the utmost proof. I asked of you no less than yourself and all that you had and were, your heart your hand and your worldly resources; *you* were to have the happiness of snatching the immortal Mr. Carlyle from the jaws of perdition which were ready to swallow him forever; to you he was to owe a home, and the peace and kind ministrations of a home; your angel

hand was to lift him from the abyss, your true bosom to be the resting-place of his marred and wearied soul; and all this you were to do for him *on trust*, in the hope that as he grew again to life and strength, he would more and more repay your celestial helpfulness, and, become what he might, would be yours utterly and wholly thro' time and eternity; — or else, such was my view of it, you were to do for yourself the kindness of forthwith ejecting him from the place he had too long unworthily occupied in your hopes and interest. These things you could not do, your fortune was called from you by a higher duty; from you I was not to receive a home. Next month I had procured one for myself. In due time I took possession of it; and here commenced, on my own poor resources, that mode of life which my own best judgement had more and more loudly declared to be essential not for my happiness but for my existence as a man deserving to exist. In this course I have continued to persevere with at least no *thought* of fluctuation; I am still persevering in it; and by God's blessing I intend to continue so till my aim is attained; till I am strong and collected enough in body and spirit to mingle, in something like my own form, with the tumultuous floods of living business, and cut my little way in it with unshackled limbs. That circumstances are not unchangeable, that wilful squirelets and unjust stewards respect not even the cottage of a German Philosopher, is no blame of mine:¹ nor does it behove me when such squire-

¹ This is said in reference to the disagreement between Carlyle's father and General Sharpe, the landlord of Hoddam Hill, which made it desirable for Carlyle to determine his tenancy of the little farm at the end of the first year.

lets and stewards have pulled down my hut about my ears, to sit down and bewail or vituperate their injustice and wilfulness, but to go forth and seek myself another dwelling. This very thing is now in progress: I must have another house; in the country, if I can, for a while longer; in Edinburgh, if I cannot. In twelve days hence the possibility or impossibility of the first scheme will have been determined; and far from the other being abandoned, I understand my brother to have been out just yesterday, surveying the environs of Edinburgh to meet that contingency. Now in all this, my kind, but overhasty Love, there appears no inconsistency to me: there is one purpose, and the means of attaining it change as the accidents on which they depend. As to my ulterior views, my hopes of employing myself profitably in this interval, and gradually working my way into a more natural condition of activity and domestic accommodation, by your permission I have told you all the fancies of my head without reserve, as they rose there; but these were transitory visions rather than fixed prospects. No man, I avow it proudly, had ever more reason to praise a woman for compliance in his schemes than I have towards you; and the thought of this has often been as water to my thirsty spirit: but really, since the first great project¹ which you were forced to reject, I do not find that I have formed any practical plan with even an approach to determination, to which your assistance was necessary or even possible. With regard to my treatment of *your* purposes, the reception this last proposal met with ought not to mislead you. I re-

¹ The Craigenputtock scheme, which Miss Welsh rejected in 1825, but gladly adopted in 1828.

garded it only as a brief whim, one night old when dispatched to me, and probably dead of a natural death before I received it. To this hour I am not sure that I understand it fully. What house were you providing for me in Einburgh? Unless indeed you meant me to live, with my Wife, in your Mother's house; a generous proposal, which, had I so taken up your meaning, would have merited a more serious deliberation, and at the very least a more courteous refusal. But this it could not be.

O Jane, Jane! Your half-jesting enumeration of your woers does anything but make me laugh. A thousand and a thousand times have I thought the same thing in deepest earnest. That you have the power of making many good matches is no secret to me; nay it would be a piece of news for me to learn that I am not the very *worst* you ever thought of. And you add with the same tearful smile: "Alas! we are married already." Let me now cut off the interjection, and say simply what is true that we are *not* married already; and do you hereby receive further my distinct and deliberate declaration that it depends on yourself, and shall always depend on yourself whether we ever be married or not. God knows I do not say this in a vulgar spirit of defiance; which in our present relation were coarse and cruel; but I say it in the spirit of disinterested affection for you, and of fear for the reproaches of my own conscience should your fair destiny be marred by me, and you wounded in the house of your friends. Can you believe it with the good nature which I declare it deserves? It would absolutely give me satisfaction to know that you thought yourself entirely free of all ties to me, but those, such as they might be, of your own still-renewed

election. It is reasonable and right that you should be concerned for your future establishment: Look round with calm eyes on the persons you mention or may hereafter so mention; and if there is any one among them whose Wife you had rather be — I do not mean whom you love better than me — but whose Wife, *all* things considered, you had rather be than mine, then *I* call upon you, I your Brother and Husband and friend thro' every fortune, to accept that man and leave me to my destiny. But if, on the contrary, my heart and my hand with the barren and perplexed destiny which promises to attend them, shall after all appear the *best* that this poor world can offer you, then take me and be content with me, and do not vex yourself with struggling to alter what is unalterable; to make a man who is poor and sick suddenly become rich and healthy. You tell me that you often weep when you think what is to become of us. It is unwise in you to weep: if you are reconciled to be *my* Wife (not the Wife of an ideal *me*, but the simple actual prosaic *me*), there is nothing frightful in the future. I look into it with more and more confidence and composure. Alas! Jane, you do not know me: it is not the poor, unknown, rejected Thomas Carlyle that you know, but the prospective rich, known and admired. I am reconciled to my fate as it stands or promises to stand ere long; I have pronounced the word *unpraised* in all its cases and numbers; and find nothing terrific in it, even when it means *unmonied*, and by the mass of his Majesty's subjects *neglected* or even partially *condemned*. I thank Heaven I have other objects in my eye than either *their* pudding or their breath. This comes of the circumstance that my Apprentice-

ship is ending, and yours still going on. O Jane! Jane! I could weep too; for I love you in my deepest heart.

These are hard sayings, my beloved Child; but I cannot spare them; and I hope, tho' bitter at first, they may not remain without wholesome influence. Do not get angry with me! Do not! I swear I deserve it not! Consider this as a true glimpse into my heart, which it is good that you contemplate with the gentleness and tolerance you have often shown me. I do not love you? If you judge it fit, I will clasp you to my bosom and my heart, as my wedded Wife, this very week: if you judge it fit, I will this very week forswear you forever. More I cannot do; but all this, when I compare myself with you, it is my duty to do. — Now think if I long for your answer! Yet not in my time, but in yours. I have lived as a *widower* from you these two days, I must live so till I hear from you again. *Till* I hear from you? Good God! Perhaps, first rightly, *when* I hear from you! — Adieu, my heart's Darling! God bless you and have you always in His keeping! I am yours, at your own disposal, forever and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 155

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON Saturday, '4th March, 1826.'

MY DEAREST, — You were right in supposing that your Letter would give me pain; but as for the "*peaceable fruit*" (if any), it is yet to come. It was

an unfortunate affair for both of us, that the only fit of jesting¹ I have had during the last three weeks, should have overtaken me just when I was in your grave presence; for if my "tearful smiles" have given so deep a wound to the heart of my Friend, the tearful frown which they have called forth has as deeply wounded mine. But as poor Napoleon used to say, "complaint is beneath my dignity," and besides, being the first aggressor, I have no right to make any.

Let me rather, then, in as far as concerns myself, if possible, put your mind at rest, and if possible, relieve it of misapprehension. In the first place, I have not — can never have — the semblance of a wish to part my fortunes from yours; at least till I know for certain the separation would promote your happiness. It was not without many hesitations that I took you for my acknowledged Partner; not without consulting my reason as well as my affection; not without viewing both the black and the bright side of the cloud: but when I *did*, it was for better for worse, for poorer for richer, in sickness and in health, forever *here* and, please God, forever and ever in the world to come. You might never, perhaps, take me home as your Bride; you might even cease to love me; or you might follow my Father to the grave; — all these things I knew were too possible; but none of them was to alter the case. You were still to be the Partner, — the chosen only Partner of my heart and soul; if not in wedded, in unwedded love; or at worst, in remembrance which would still be love. This, once for all, was my determination, when I accepted your heart and hand;

¹ Miss Welsh forgets that she used the word "seriously" at the beginning of her criticism of Carlyle's projects.

and do me the justice to believe, it knows no shadow of change.

But surely, surely, Mr. Carlyle, you must know me better than to have supposed it possible I should ever make a new choice. To say nothing of the sentiments I entertain towards *you*, which would make a marriage with another worse than death, is there no spark of honour, think you, in this heart, that I should not blush at the bare idea of such shame? Give myself to another, after having given myself with such unreservedness to you! Take another to my arms, with your image on my heart, your kisses on my lips! Oh, be honest, and say you knew this could never be,—knew I could never sink so low! Let me not have room to suppose that, possessing your love, I am unfortunate enough to be without your respect! For how light must my open fondness have seemed, if you doubted of its being sanctified by a marriage-vow—a vow spoken indeed before no Minister, but before a presence surely as awful, God and my conscience. And yet, it is so unlike *you*, the sworn enemy of cant, to make high-sounding offers in the firm confidence of their being rejected! and unless I lay this to your charge in the present instance, how can I help concluding that there is some virtue in me which you have yet to learn? for it is in no jesting, or yet “half-jesting” manner that you tell me my hand is free. “If there be any other—you do not mean whom I love more,—but whose Wife, all things considered, I would rather be, you call upon me as my Husband (as my Husband!) to accept that man.” Were these words really Thomas Carlyle’s and addressed to *me*? “*Ach! Ich kenne dich nicht mehr!*” [Ah! I understand thee no

more!]¹ Dearest! Dearest! it will take many caresses to atone for these words!

I am not surprised that you feel hurt by my railery on the subject of your plans, since you view it as an indication of an unfair theory of your character. But, in truth, it is nothing of the sort. I think you neither whimsical nor inconstant; think you nothing but what is noble and wise. I know full well you have more serious distresses than idleness and a diseased imagination; and, at the bottom of my heart, far from censuring, I approve of your whole procedures. But I cannot help sometimes getting provoked at the Fortune which keeps us asunder; and when this happens, I am too apt to vent the spleen of the moment upon you; tho' the next moment I am ready to fall at your feet and wash them with my tears. Such behaviour I grant you is very wrong, and unworthy of a woman of sense and feeling; yet surely it is not the sin against the Holy Ghost that it should be punished with such a heart-breaking lecture.

You say you are "the very worst *match* I ever thought of; that it is reasonable and right I should be concerned for my future *establishment*." My Brother, you were wont to call me generous, devoted, noble-minded: how comes it you address me now as a vulgar creature whose first object is "a *good settlement*?" Such sayings from another would have found with me no gentle hearing; and probably called forth an indignant expression of my mind. But when the man I have loved with a love so pure from all worldliness; for whom I am ready to sacrifice everything on earth but my sense of right, — when *he* talks to me of matches and estab-

¹ Schiller's "Wilhelm Tell," Act ii. sc. 1.

lishments and riches and honours, it is the thrust of a Brother, which it would be ignominy to resist.

There is another expression in your Letter which I cannot pass without noticing. "If," you say, "your hand and heart appear after all the best in my offer" (*if* they appear the best!) "to take you and be content with you and not vex myself with struggling to attain what is unattainable." Now, with all due gratitude for this *absolute leave*, I must be bold to observe that I *have* taken you for already some time; and was never otherwise than content with you since you came into my possession. If I weep when I think what is to become of us, it is not because you are poor and unknown and may possibly remain so all the days of your life. There needs no Apprenticeship to train me to disinterestedness of heart. It is because in the *actual* state of things (and we know not when they may alter) the duties, — the unavoidable duties, — of a Daughter and Friend, keep me from your dear side; keep me from sharing your destiny, whatever it be. It *is* unwise, I own, to weep on any account; and doubly so to vex another with our weeping; but methinks you should have some allowance for my tears, since a woman in love is the very weakest of live creatures.

One thing more and I am done. Look cross at me, reproach me, even whip me, if you have the heart; your next kiss will make amends for all. But if you love me, cease, I beseech you, to make me offers of freedom; for this is an outrage which I find it not easy to forgive. If made with any idea that it is in the nature of things I should take you at your word, they do a wrong to my love, my truth, my modesty, that is, to my whole character as a woman; if not, they are a mocking better spared,

since you know my answer must be still : " Permit me, O Shindarig, to wear out my days in prison, for its walls are to me more pleasing than the most splendid Palace ! " — But *Ohe jam satis !* — Farewell, my Beloved. I am still yours,

JANE BAILLIE WELSH.

It may not be amiss to mention that I am recovering strength. Write without loss of time, if you can write as my own kind Husband ; if not, delay a day or two till I have got my nerves a little braced in the open air. I have by no means told you " all I know," but my paper is already over-full.

LETTER 156

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 7th March, 1826.

MY BELOVED WIFE!—You are an Angel of Light, and I am a mean man of earthly clay, who ought not to mete you by a standard fit only for vulgar natures. I have scanned this Letter with critical eyes, to see if I could discern in it any trace of vindictive yet natural selfishness, any shadow of retaliation for my harshness, any glance of splenetic pride, any look of anger or recrimination : and I have found none ! Nothing but long-suffering meekness and gentleness, and loving weeping expostulation ! My Noble Jane ! Thy heart has taught thee a philosophy better than all the Schools will ever teach me. I am not worthy of such a heart ; or my little paltry pride would not so easily catch fire, and turn a harmless jest into matter of such stern specu-

lation. Have you not cause to weep over the arrangements of our Fortune? And in whose bosom can you shed those tears but in mine? Have you not cause, unknowing as you *must* be of much that is peculiar in my lot, to feel displeasure at many things I do and neglect to do? And am not I your last and only friend: to whom can you utter that displeasure but to me?

But let us forget the whole misunderstanding. Positively you *must* forget it. You cannot keep anger in your heart against me; can you? Against *me*, poor me, who love and honour you as I have good cause; and whose fault is not want of tenderness to you, but of confidence in myself! These perplexities come of our living eighty miles asunder, and not by each other's side. Forget them, my own true-hearted Wife! Forget them; dry up your tears, and smile in my face, and all will be as it was! Are you pacified? Are you good to me? You love me forever, Jane; and neither height nor depth, nor things present nor things to come shall ever separate you from my heart. So be content my Darling! and get well again, and write me a sunnier Letter; for I have still much, much of a far finer sort than the last to tell you. And let us no more remember this unseasonable cloud; and let not the Mountain ask if it came from the Valley, or the Valley if it came from the Mountain: but let bright Summer weather come back, and both of us rejoice in its presence. Ah! if I were beside you I would soon make up the peace. I would steal my arms about you, and lead you to my heart, and ask you if you thought it was not yours. Could you resist me? Would you turn away your face and your kisses from my prayer? No, Jane! You would

not, and could not: for we are one in heart and soul; and if we had twenty thousand such misunderstandings, they must all come to one result at last. It is forgotten then: is it not?

I got your Letter along with *five* proof-sheets: but no hurry of business would excuse me for keeping you in such a state one day longer than the shortest possible time. I write this in stolen moments as a peace-offering: I will write to you again, about a hundred other things the moment you tell me all is well; perhaps on Sunday, whether you tell me or not.

For you must know Darling, I have some important subjects meditating at this time. You bade me tell you all the imaginations of the thoughts of my heart: and I have had a wild scheme for these four or five weeks in my head; a scheme in which your "assistance" is not only "possible" but essential. Can you guess it? Dare you make yourself a beggar within six months? Dare you wed a wild man of the woods and come and live with him in his cavern, in hope of better days? I declare, it is shameful to make you such an offer: and yet what can be done? Wedded we must and shall be some time: why not *soon* as well as *syne*? If Fortune will not make us rich, the base shrew, why not make ourselves rich, richer in each other's arms than the Kings and Kaisers of the Earth! "It is madness," you say? No, Dearest, it is not; but a *judicious desperation*, a bold venture to escape from Purgatory fire into the verdant Groves of Heaven! Who knows but we shall prosper? I feel as if with you in my bosom, I should be a new man; as if the bitterness of life would pass away like a forgotten tempest, and I and my own loved ones should

walk in bright weather. Is not thy heart mine, *Liebchen*? Thy whole soul and being, mine? Why then are our lots parted, tho' mine is of the poorest? In sober truth, my Love, I do wish you would consider this matter: for I myself have been studying it in every mood for many days; and the longer I think of it, the more feasible the more rational it seems. If I get a house in the Country, why should it not be yours also? My Mother has told me two hundred times that she expected to have you with her again in Summer: would she like you worse or better as her own Daughter; would you be happier as her guest or as your Chosen's Wife? O Jane! My soft true-hearted Jane! Are we not wealth and health and all blessedness to one another?

Perhaps I am a fool to whisper this to you as it stands at present: for as yet I have not even a cottage to offer you share of. In two days that latter question, however, will be determined: and go as it may, I declare to thee, my Child, that I see nothing for it but our Union "for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health," now and forever, and this at no distant date. Think of it, consider, study, help me to meditate! It is the highest concern of both.

But I must cease and determine; for my work is leaving me out of sight, and *without* a start, it is all that I can do to keep up with it. Read this Letter with the image of my hurry in your eye; and if you find any delirium in it, think that perhaps in a sober moment the aid of reflexion would have suppressed it. Above all consider of this cottage scheme, and tell me if it is possible.

Another word I must not write tonight. Will

you answer this Letter directly? Perhaps I shall *not* write to you on Sunday: what more can I say, till this business be sifted, and the wheat of it (if any) picked from the chaff by your hand?

Jane has not forgot you or your Mother: but is busy making ready for returning thanks. At least so I suppose. The creature has caught two or three of *your* looks, and sometimes recalls you to my mind as if you stood in this very room, which never had or will have such another inmate. Good night, my Beloved! Write to me that you are well, that you still love me, that you will be mine!

I am your own forever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 157

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, Thursday, '16 March, 1826.'

OH, my Beloved, what a tantalizing Letter is this which was meant to drive away all trouble from my mind! What a Paradise it sets before my eyes, from which I am shut out as with a flaming sword! Would I dare to make myself a beggar within six months; to wed my "wild man of the woods," and go and live in his cavern? Yes, Dearest, that I would without fear or misgiving, and deem myself the richest, best-lodged Lady in the Land. Indeed I can figure to myself no happier lot on this side Heaven than that which is so touchingly imaged in your own "*Wish*";¹ and *that*, it seems to me, might be realized to the letter in a cottage in Annandale,

¹ For Carlyle's "*Wish*," see Appendix A, No. 7.

as well as in any other "calm home" on the surface of the earth; and as well, moreover, in our present circumstances as in more affluent ones. For it is not with a great equipage we should best "go hand in hand, the heart's joy with the mind's light interweaving, to Wisdom's haunts, to Fancy's fairy Land." While "the undying minds of every age around us" are a society that may be frequented at little cost, in the plainest apparel, and without return of entertainment; and "the world's, our being's, mystery," tho' the most sublime and interesting of all possible spectacles, is free to every one who hath eyes to see, whether he be rich or poor. Were happiness, then, the thing chiefly to be cared for in this world, I would even put my hand in yours *now*, as you say, and so cut the Gordian knot of our destiny at once. But O, my Husband, have you not told me a thousand times, — and my conscience tells me also, — that happiness is only a secondary consideration. It must not, must not be sought out of the path of Duty. And does the happiness that now invites me lie in that path? Should I do well to go into Paradise myself, and leave the Mother who bore me to break her heart? She is looking forward to my marriage with a more tranquil mind, in the hope that our separation is to be in a great measure nominal; that by living wheresoever my Husband lives, she may at least have every moment of my society which he can spare. And how would it be possible not to disappoint her in this hope, if I went to reside with your people in Annandale? Her presence *there* would be a perpetual cloud over our little world of love and peace. For the sake of all concerned, it would be necessary to keep her quite apart from us; and apart from us, yet so near,

she would be the most wretched of Mothers, the most desolate woman in the world. O, is it for *me* to make her so? me who am so unspeakably dear to her, in spite of all her caprice; who am her only, only child, — and her a widow? I love you Mr. Carlyle, tenderly, devotedly as ever woman loved; but I may not put my Mother away from me even for *your* sake. I cannot do it! I have lain awake whole nights since I received your Letter, trying to reconcile this act with my conscience; but my conscience will have nothing to say to it, — rejects it with indignation.

What is to be done then? Indeed, I see only one way of escape out of all these perplexities. Be patient with me while I tell you what it is. My Mother like myself, has ceased to find any contentment in this pitiful Haddington; and is bent on disposing of our house here, as soon as may be, and hiring one elsewhere. The *where* I perceive rests with me to determine. Now why should it not be the vicinity of Edinburgh after all? And why should not you live with your Wife in her Mother's house? Because, you say, my Mother would never have the grace to like you or let you live with her in peace. Because you could never have any right enjoyment of my society so long as you had me not all to yourself; and finally because you must and will have a door of your own to slam in the face of nauseous intrusions. These are objections, it must be allowed, which *sound* almost fatal to my scheme; but I am greatly mistaken if they are not more sound than substance. My Mother *would* like you; oh, assuredly she would, if you came to live with her as her Son. For what is it, Dearest, that has so prejudiced her against you? Is it not terror lest

thro' your means she should be made childless, and a weak imagination that you regard her with disrespect? Both which rocks of offence would be removed by this one concession. Besides as my wedded Husband, you would appear to her in quite a new light; her maternal affection, of which there is abundance at the bottom of her heart, would of necessity extend itself to him with whom I was become so inseparably connected; and mere common-sense would prescribe a kind motherly behaviour to you, as the only expedient to make the best of what could no longer be helped. As to your second objection, it seems to me still lighter than the first; for would it not be ridiculous to continue altogether beggars in happiness because the possession of it is encumbered with a trifling tax? to live on joyless and solitary, thus far asunder, rather than give to Duty a few hours each day from our full enjoyment of each other's society? Surely it were better to make the sacrifice required of us, without murmuring; and verily it would secure its own reward. The hours that remained to us, which we might devote exclusively to one another, would be the dearer for being interrupted.

The intrusions of a mob of idle visitors would indeed be a nuisance greater than we could bear; but really I do not see that we should be called upon to bear it. Might it not be made a *sine qua non* in the treaty with my Mother that we should be exempted from having any concern with her company? and that the door of our study should be made sufficiently strong enough to keep every living soul of them outside? Think then, Darling, and answer me. Would you live with me in my Mother's house? Say No, if you judge that best,

without fear that I will take it amiss. Indeed, indeed, I would not sway you, tho' I could; for I know well enough the infinite superiority of your judgement. Say Yes, and I propose the thing to my Mother. I have no manner of doubt but she will give it a willing, a joyful hearing. Should it however, contrary to all human expectation, turn out otherwise, why then, let it be as you will. In that case our separation would be *her* doing, not mine. I should have been mistaken in thinking myself indispensable to her happiness. Oh me! I am much to be pitied: my heart is divided against itself. Would to Heaven we saw each other's face; for I find it impossible to set these things down on paper as I feel them in my heart. Let me use as many words as I like, my meaning is still but imperfectly expressed.

But I must conclude for the present or miss another post. I waited till yesterday that I might answer both your Letters at once, in case you had written, as you partly promised, on Sunday. And yesterday I was distracted with headache. Write the first hour you have leisure.

God for ever bless you. I am yours heart and soul.

JANE B. WELSH.

LETTER 158

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, Monday, '19 March, 1826.'

MY GOOD LOVE, — I guessed what was detaining your Letter: but I scarcely dared to expect it on

Saturday. It came in company with a quarter of a volume of *Proofs*, or I should have answered yesterday. But the villainous sheets kept me working till midnight, and now I am to be busy beyond all measure for a week or more. You must just wait, *Liebchen*, till *next* opportunity; and in the mean time I will keep that royal project resting in my thoughts; and who knows but it may be lighter when I come to write of it.

You are a true-hearted woman, after all, my little Girl; and I love you in my inmost heart, I believe, notwithstanding my perversities. I also vote that, at all haps and hazards, we be married *soon*: but I love you better for your love of your Mother; and depend on it, my Dearest, your conscience is no more precious in your own eyes than in mine. These things must be reconciled. Your plan is bright as the May morn on one side: but (alas, for the conjunction!) there are many *but*s. Think of it, and leave me to think of it; and I will send you my best *deliverance* in due time. And so keep thy heart at peace, my bonny bride; and I too will live in full hope: for in some few months, it shall go hard if thou be not lying in my bosom, never to be parted from me any more, but *mine* forever and ever. *O Himmel und Erde!*

This small scrap of a Note I owe the opportunity of writing to an arrangement of Jane's. She has manufactured two pairs of *wristikins* [cuffs]; one for your Mother and one for you; which I am to send by this parcel; she also essayed to write; but with her whole skill, it would not do; and so her *love* must be content like neighbour Franz's, to continue *Dumb*.¹ It is not the less true on that account.

¹ See the story called "Dumb Love," in "German Romance."

To rejoice your heart still further, I send you a small *Sowing Song*,¹ which I manufactured the other night, when too sick and dull to commence the *Life of Goethe*. "I had better have been minding my work?" Devil take you! is that all my thanks?

Yet you are right: for I never had more cause to work. M'Corkindale (do but consider what a sonorous name!), the most superlative of Printers, is languishing for this *Life*, and his thirsty soul is panting for it as the hart for waterbrooks. And the thing is not begun yet! — Adieu! — Ten thousand kisses! —

Yours forever and ever,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 159

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 2nd April, 1826.

DEAREST WEIBCHEN, — I have kept thee long waiting; but I could not come a moment sooner, much as I wished to come. Till last night my hands were full of that magnanimous *Life of Goethe*, as the echo of it is still sounding in my head. What kept me so long with it? You partly, you little wretch! For the first three or four days all that I could do, you would not go about your business; and whenever I sat down to my canvas to draw this majestic countenance, the kind roguish face of Jane Welsh came peeping over the easel, and I was forced to look into her black bright eyes, and they

¹ Carlyle afterwards called this the "Sower's Song." It appears in his "Miscellanies," vol. i.

put me out. It was very wrong of you, you shameful creature. But I will remember all these sins by and by.

Even yet I am in the extremest haste; and must now write of the most important concern of both your life and my own without either due deliberation or due detail. My present sentiments on the matter I will endeavour to express to you, lying still open to farther light. In the first place let me tell you what my plan *was*, before your counter-plan came athwart it.

I have got a Cottage here, as I anticipated; that is my Father and Alick have rented the Farm of Scotsbrig (a place they like much better than Shawbrae, at the rent of £190); and I am to be master of the house there till the Mainhill lease expire (Whitsunday 1827); the Hill colony moving thither in the interim, at the approaching Term.¹ This is an event which gives me more satisfaction than you would readily conceive: not on my own account only, but on that of my kindred, who can now regard the ill-nature of our rural Ali Pacha² with a degree of equanimity much easier to attain than formerly. Ali, I mean "his Honour," Major General Sharpe, and I had such a *schene* the other day at this door! I made Graham of Burnswark laugh at it yesterday all the way from Annan to Hoddam Bridge. In short, Ali sank in the space of little more than a minute from 212° Fahrenheit's thermometer to 32°, and retired even *below* the freezing point.

¹ *I. e.* the 26th of May.

² "Since the days of our prophet the Crescent ne'er saw
A chief ever glorious like Ali Pacha."

"Childe Harold," Canto ii. st. 72.

Now this house of Scotsbrig which is to be mine for a year, and in which I have a moderately good right to a domicile as long afterwards as I like, is one of the most monstrously ugly and uncultivated-looking houses you ever set your eyes on. Nevertheless, it is tight and dry: it is to be floored, windowed, doored anew; and by this means the upper story will be made habitable enough for me, and there will be *plenty* of room below for all the rest. And now, *Liebchen*, this was my plan: Having finished my Translation, and got my cash for it, I was to kneel down before you, and ask your hand: this little soft hand you could not refuse me; but I was to press it forever in my own; and fairly carry you off into the wolds of Annandale, into this Kamtschatka establishment, which I knew and believed the presence of your Husband would render as beautiful as many far grander and costlier mansions. Here then was an asylum for us; a shelter at least against the *meanest* distresses of existence; a humble but secure roadstead to which we could run whenever poverty or other bad weather made the high seas too rude for our vessel.

How you were to employ yourself here in the meanwhile, I had not calculated very accurately. You would have Jane and our Mother to love you and impart to you the simple scenery of their obscure but still human existence; you might study the first elements of housewifery; you would have books and pens; and gay rides with me on bright sunshiny days. For myself I was resolved on writing a Book, no compilation or biography but a *Book* (which, through the strength of Heaven, I will yet write); and so to be busier thro' the day than when you staid with us at the Hill. But then



SCOTSBRIG HOUSE

at evening there was to be tea put on the table, and a circle of glad faces was to gather round it, and there we should sit and talk, or I should read, and play with your black locks; for you were then my own to all Eternity, and no other man or woman had any part or lot in your true bosom but myself. And so in this way I reckoned that, with diligence and rest, with wisdom and desipience, with quarrelling and fighting and kissing and caressing, we might contrive to weather till the Winter season tolerably enough. Then, if I were stronger, or if we found the Country getting too disagreeable, with the strength I have, I was to set out for Edinburgh, and try if I could get a Cottage there (I am told they are to be had furnished then); at all events, next Whitsunday, unless Fortune was too cruel to us, we were to go northward and commence housekeeping there, on our own foundation. I should have £200 at any rate to begin with; and many an honest couple has begun with less. Jane might have gone with us, and helped you; some ancient thrifty serving-maid would have completed our establishment. In truth we should be poor, as poor need be: but what then, we should learn, we would and could learn, to suit our outlay to our income; we should stand steadfastly by one another thro' scarcity and abundance, if ever abundance came, as it might possibly do; and so thro' honour from others or the absence of it, we should feel that we were true and good, and happy in each other's arms, and obliged for our happiness to no earthly soul, but to Heaven only.

As we think mostly of our own wants and wishes alone, in all this royal project I had taken no dis-

tinct account of your Mother.¹ I merely remembered the text of Scripture: "Thou shalt leave Father and Mother, and cleave unto thy Husband, and thy desire shall be towards him all the days of thy life." I imagined perhaps she might go to Dumfriesshire, and gratify her heart by increasing the accommodations of her Father, which she would then have ample means to do; perhaps that she might even — in short that she might arrange her destiny in many ways, to which my presence must be a hindrance rather than a furtherance. Here I was selfish and thoughtless: I might have known that the love of a Mother to her only Child is indestructible and irreplaceable; that forcibly to cut asunder such ties was cruel and unjust.

Perhaps, as I have told you, Love, I may not yet have got to the bottom of this new plan [of yours] so completely as I wished: but there is one thing that strikes me more and more, the longer I think of it. This the grand objection of all objections, the head and front of offence, the soul of all my counter-pleading; an objection which is too likely to upset the whole project. It may be stated in a word: *The man should bear rule in the house and not the woman.*² This is an eternal axiom, the Law of Nature herself which no mortal departs from unpunished. I have meditated on this many long years, and every day it grows plainer: I must not

¹ Miss Welsh had told Carlyle, more than once in her Letter of 31 January, 1825, that it was her mother's express wish to go and live with her father at Templand. See also next Letter.

² "The man should be master of the house, and not the wife; this is his special right, and so it is established everywhere, among all people," says Musäus in "Libussa," which Carlyle was now translating.

and I cannot live in a house of which I am not head. I should be miserable myself, and make all about me miserable. Think not, Darling, that this comes of an imperious temper; that I shall be a harsh and tyrannical Husband to thee. God forbid! But it is the nature of a man that if he be controlled by anything but his own reason, he feels himself degraded; and incited, be it justly or not, to rebellion and discord. It is the nature of a woman again (for she is essentially *passive* not *active*) to cling to the man for support and direction; to comply with his humours, and feel pleasure in doing so, simply because they are his; to reverence while she loves him, to conquer him not by her force but by her weakness, and perhaps (the cunning gypsy!) after all to command him by obeying him. It is inexpressible what an increase of happiness, and of consciousness, wholesome consciousness of inward dignity I have gained since I came within the walls of this poor Cottage. My own four walls!¹ For in my state this Primeval Law of Nature acts on *me* with double and triple force. And how cheaply it is purchased, and how smoothly managed! They simply admit that I am *Herr im Hause*, and act on this conviction. Here is no grumbling about my habitudes and whims: if I choose to dine on fire and brimstone,

¹ "My own four walls" is, in Scotland especially, often used as an equivalent for "my own house." The poem by Carlyle, called "My own Four Walls," was not written at Hoddam Hill, however, but at Craigenputtock; probably in 1829. The handwriting and paper of the original, and the expressions "Whinstone house," "Moorland house," and the mention of a wife are alone sufficient to prove this. Carlyle's biographer seems to have doubted that anything so cheerful as "My own Four Walls" *could* have been composed at Craigenputtock. — See Appendix A, No. 14.

they will cook it for me to their best skill ; thinking only that I am an unintelligible mortal ; perhaps in their secret souls, a kind of humourist, *fascheous*,¹ to deal with, but no bad soul after all, and *not* to be dealt with in *any* other way. My own four walls !

Your Mother is of all women the best calculated for being a *Wife*, and the worst for being a *Husband*. I know her perhaps better than she thinks ; and it is not without affection and sincere esteem that I have seen the fundamental structure of her character, and the many light capricious half-graces half-follies that sport on the surface of it. I could even fancy that she might love me also, and feel happy beside me, if her own true and kindly character were come into fair and free communion with mine, which she might then find was neither false nor cruel any more than her own. But this could only be (I will speak it out at once and boldly, for it is the quiet and kind conviction of my judgement, not the conceited and selfish conviction of my vanity : this could only be) in a situation where she looked up to *me*, not *I* to her.

Now, think, *Liebchen*, whether your Mother will consent to forget her own riches, and my poverty, and uncertain most probably scanty income ; and consent in the spirit of Christian meekness to make *me* her guardian and director, and be a second *Wife* to her Daughter's Husband. If she can, then I say, she is a noble woman ; and in the name of Truth and Affection, *let* us all live together, and be one household and one heart till Death, or her own choice part us ! If she cannot, which will do anything but surprise me, then alas ! the other thing cannot be, must not be ; and for her sake, no

¹ Scottish for “troublesome.”

less than for yours and mine, we must think of something else. Explain all this, Jane, in your own dialect; for unless you explain it, it may be dreadfully misunderstood. Then tell me the result without the loss of a moment. Love me always in the centre of your heart and believe me your own,

T. CARLYLE.

My Mother has scolded me regularly every time these three last Letters, for not sending her compliments and love. She is come in this moment; and orders me to wish you "*all good things.*" She knows of the Scotsbrig plan; and says she "would have you look up to the Almighty for counsel in this and all your goings." — She is longing for another Letter. But mine first! *Addio.*

LETTER 160

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, 10th 'April, 1826.'

MY DEAREST, — You are thinking, I presume, that I might have done your bidding with less delay; but the fact is, I have not lost one minute that could be saved. Judge if I have. Your Letter found me in the saddest domestic *burble* imaginable: our maid-servant lay in one part of the house at death's door with fever and asthma; in another part of it lay my Mother about as ill with an attack of bile; and to crown all, just in this evil nick, a "fool-creature" must needs come on a visit. While things were in this way, as you may well conceive, I had no leisure to make the needful disclo-

tures ; besides, it was no propitious season for my Mother to hear them in. And a week passed before the household was convalescent and the "fool-creature" departed, and my hands thus left free to go about my Master's business. So you see, I am no bad Ariel after all.

Eh bien! I have informed my Mother, in a long Letter, of all which it concerned her to know (so long a *speech* being as Jean says, "beyond the utmost compass of my ability"); and the result is, — what do you think? — that, provided we manage matters aright, you and I are *soon* to be the happiest pair of people in all Annandale!

My Mother does not object to my wedding you in your actual circumstances ; on the contrary, she thinks it, all things considered, the best I can do ; and neither does she object to my living with you in your Fatherland ; which shows a heroism on her part that I did not dare to look for. In short my kind, reasonable Mother views our romantic project with all the favour that heart could desire ; and not by the cold, bleak light of worldly prudence, but the rosy sunlight of poetry, which is in this case *truth*.

And we will not be purchasing our happiness at the cost of hers ; for she will live (she says) at Templand, and visit us as often as may be. And this arrangement, I believe after all, is the very best that the case admits. My Mother is fond of Nithsdale, and we will make her fond of Annandale also. In the one place she will have kind friends about her, whom she dearly likes, and within her the consciousness of doing good to her Father and Sister ; in the other she will find you and I, ourselves a host, and will not be *fremd*, she declares to

me, with your kindred, but esteem them as they deserve. Moreover, the *other* plan, however well it had been proved to answer, could not, I find have had any permanency. My Grandfather must in the course of nature be taken from us at no distant day; and my Aunt would then be left alone and helpless, were not my Mother to become her protector. That must not be,—is not to be thought of. In going to live with her now, then, my Mother is only *anticipating* what *must* be, as far as human calculation reaches, her ultimate destination. And in thus anticipating it, she will have the comfort of watching over her Father's declining age, and adding to his scanty accommodations,—a comfort which will atone to her Mother's-heart for the partial loss of her Daughter's company. On these grounds she prefers that we should have separate households; and on these grounds I am willing that we should. So, what more remains to be *said*? Are you happy? You must be the most ungrateful of mortals if you are not, in the near prospect of having such a Wife. Oh, *mein Gott!* *such* a Wife!

The strangest thing has just occurred which I cannot but view as an omen that the gods are with us: a proposal is come to my Mother from Dr. Fyffe, *since I began writing*, to take this house off our hands upon any terms; and we have never yet mentioned to any one that we thought of disposing of it! Was there ever anything so *providential*? *Ach, wie kalt, wie dumm ist dieser Brief! Meine Mutter seht ihn, und Ich scheue mich ihr meiner ganze Seelen zu zeigen.* [Ah, how cold, how stupid this Letter is! My Mother sees it, and I am shy of showing her my whole soul.]

But my Mother is waiting to write a postscript, so I must make an end of this ugly Letter, the matter of which I trust will make amends for the manner.

Forever yours,

JANE B. WELSH.

P.S. by Mrs. Welsh :

MY DEAR SIR, — Jane has read to me what she has communicated to you respecting our future destination: which I trust will meet with your approval. This long perplexing emigration of ours draws to a close. May God grant that it may draw us all together in the bonds of love and happiness. With every good wish for your welfare, believe me in affection what you would wish the Mother of your Jane to be.

G. WELSH.

Write to my Mother. J. B. W.

At this point there are two or three Letters unfortunately missing: in a postscript to her last Letter Miss Welsh asked Carlyle to write to her Mother; and there is evidence to show that he did so; but unluckily neither his Letter to Mrs. Welsh nor her reply to it, has been preserved. Miss Welsh had written too, as Carlyle's next Letter (22 April) indicates; but hers also has been lost. A Letter by Carlyle to his Brother John, dateable by internal evidence '14th April,' throws a little light on what was probably the main subject of the missing Letters, and it being otherwise of interest, a few sentences from it may not improperly be cited here :

“‘Have I heard of Miss Welsh? O Jack! there is the mightiest secret in that matter; a secret which I have yet whispered only to our Mother, and which, when I now commit it to thy faithful ear, must be shrouded in deepest silence. I really do believe she and I are going to be mar-

ried this very Summer! ‘First recover that, and thou shalt hear more.’ So soon as I have finished my Book, and the Scotsbrig house is swept and garnished, it is about settled that I am to bring the young damsel thither. The Winter, I suppose or partly hope, we may spend at Haddington: for her Mother goes to Templand to live; and I have just been persuading them not to let their house to Dr. Fyffe. . . .

“God knows, my good Jack, I look forward, as Pears said, to this affair with very *queer* feelings. I am to have a Wife whom I have long loved beyond any other woman: but bless your heart Sir! there are five thousand other things to be taken into account at the same time! *Doch frisch heran!* [Cheerily onwards!] Who never ventured never won! After all what do I venture? A precious destiny forsooth, here as I sit! In short, Jack, what must be must be: and so, by this axiom which no logic, not the very gates of Ewart’s shop, can prevail against, I am to be wedded. . . .

“*Both* the contracting parties are to be equally poor; and so the hearth however faint its glimmer, will be mine and mine’s.”

To persuade Mrs. Welsh and her daughter to keep possession of their house at Haddington for a little longer Carlyle found to be a task more difficult than he had expected. For reasons of their own, chiefly dislike to Haddington itself as a place of residence, scarcity of finances (which were derived solely from the rent of Craigenputtock at this time let to a tenant who was often in arrears with his payments of £180 per annum), the probability of unpleasant complications with Dr. Fyffe (an old lover of Miss Welsh’s) who lived in the front portion of the Haddington house, and whom Carlyle and his wife could scarcely have avoided meeting daily or oftener,—they had determined once for all to dispose of it as soon as possible.

On hearing of their intention of selling the house, it occurred to Carlyle that to postpone this operation for six months or a year would afford the readiest and best solution of the problem of finding a suitable home for himself

and wife to live in until their prospects mended; and it seems that he wrote at once to Mrs. Welsh submitting this new plan to her consideration. Mrs. Welsh's reply must have been a flat refusal, which of course she had a perfect right to give; but it is too likely that her decision would be expressed otherwise than in good-natured and conciliatory terms. At any rate the result was the introduction of a little regrettable, but under the circumstances not altogether unpardonable, acerbity into some of Carlyle's allusions to Mrs. Welsh in a few of the Letters which follow.¹

Carlyle's earlier project of beginning housekeeping at Scotsbrig (a farm which his father hoped to rent) had to be renounced for various unforeseen reasons: the chief of these being, first, the long uncertainty there was of getting quiet possession of the farm; secondly, the disapproval of the scheme gently but firmly expressed by Carlyle's parents; and, lastly, the unsuitableness of Scotsbrig for the purpose, which became apparent to Carlyle on more mature deliberation and on better knowledge of the circumstances and conditions of living there.

Chiefly owing to the unfriendliness of Mrs. Welsh, which prevented the young people from meeting and talking the matter over fully and freely, the choosing of a residence was long delayed. But in the end the plan finally adopted was the one first proposed by Carlyle himself: namely, the hiring of a small cottage in Edinburgh. This

¹ It is satisfactory and pleasant to know that after this little difficulty in regard to a dwelling was settled, the relations between Carlyle and Mrs. Welsh became, and remained to the end of their lives, heartily affectionate and loving. Carlyle left Craigenputtock for London in 1834, "wetted with poor Mrs. Welsh's tears"; and when visiting him in his London home (which she often did) a few years later, Mrs. Welsh declared that she "was very sensible of his kind treatment of her," and that he had been to her "everything that heart could desire." And Carlyle's tribute to Mrs. Welsh's character, given in the "Reminiscences" and Annotations, is almost unique from a son-in-law to a mother-in-law, — a relationship proverbially *difficile*.

was 21 Comley Bank, taken yearly at a rent of £32 per annum.

LETTER 161

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 22nd April, 1826.

MY DEAREST,— Your Letter¹ lay two days in the Post-office, and I have kept it another day in my hands, to see whether any light would dawn out of the utter darkness with which the first perusal of it overshadowed me. The process of dawning has been ineffectual enough still: but time presses; and I must snatch an hour to communicate my views to you, such as they are.

I had schemed all this affair so nicely: the Haddington house came in with such aptness to meet the new difficulties which the transition from a *project* to a *plan* never fails to bring along with it: here we might live in love and wise peace on our own unassisted resources, till there seemed a fair chance of removing with prudence to a more genial sphere; here we should be secluded in harmonious and not inactive privacy, entering on the journey of our life at a rate no quicker than we might calculate on keeping up! I declare to you that even I who live without hope in the world, walking not by faith but by vision, could but pronounce the aspect of the future to be much meeker and more settled, and ominous of clearer weather for us both. And now comes your Letter, a gay kind loving Letter, souse like a cannon ball on my little edifice, shattering

¹ This Letter has been lost.

it in a moment into fragments ; which how we are to rebuild I confess I yet see not.

To complete the matter, the unfortunate scoundrel who for the present occupies Scotsbrig has the other day procured a Sheriff's *interdict* against our husbandmen : the ploughs are there resting from their labours ; and the ejection of that unhappy mortal from his quarters has become a problem for the civil authorities.¹ For aught I can discover, it seems probable enough that I shall have to retire with my writing ware, for perhaps a good part of summer, into the dark but hospitable cave of Mainhill.

You ask me if I have any objection to reside in Edinburgh. To Edinburgh none, to any quarter of the Earth none, so I be occupied in my duty and with those I love, so I can live wisely for myself and those dear to me and dependent on me. Your Mother, with a generosity worthy of her, has offered to furnish us a house there. I do thank her from the inmost part of my heart ; and I beg you to let her see that if I decline this most kind proposal, it is from no false prideful feeling, which would ill become me towards her, but from a perception of its inapplicability to my circumstances, from a persuasion that her bounty would be wasted.

Alas ! I do fear this plan is impracticable. In the first place, it is too likely that by this time all but the refuse of the houses are let ; an argument which like

¹ The tenant of Scotsbrig, although he had become insolvent, refused to give up his lease, and endeavoured by aid of the law to prevent James Carlyle's entry on the farm. The matter looked very ominous while Carlyle was writing this Letter, and indeed a final settlement of the difficulty was not reached until near the middle of May.



MAINHILL (NEAR VIEW)

the *first* reason for the witness's absence, his *death*, precludes the necessity of stating the other nineteen. In this, however, I may be wrong, and you have better knowledge; so I pass from it. But supposing us fairly wedded, and settled in a pretty Cottage in the suburbs of Edinburgh, have you well considered how the roof-tree of it is to be kept above our heads? By the best calculation I can make, the expense of living there in the same comfort as in Haddington would be rather more than doubled. Such a house as the one where you now sit, would cost if furnished somewhere about £150 a-year: one very greatly inferior which I visited at Morningside was charged £60 for the bare unpapered and unpainted walls. The humblest cottage, humble enough in sooth, costs between £30 and £40. To say nothing of taxes; of "*filthy hallions*"¹ of landlords; of the thousand and one expenses and discomforts of living in large towns, which I unhappily know far better than you. Have you figured yourself planted here, in the midst of splendour and scarcity, your sick Husband, whom your caresses melted into weakness but could not soothe into peace, forced to *hawk* the laborious products of an aching head and heart for a piece of money, and become the drudge of gross thick-sided booksellers that he and his might be saved from ruin? By God's blessing, I will live in a dog-hutch, on the produce of the brook and the furrow, before this shall even threaten me. And let other men and other women say of it whatever shall seem good to them: the atmospheric air is wide enough to furnish breath for us all.

O Jane! my good true Jane, that loveth me in your

¹ Hallion, an idle ill-mannered good-for-nothing.

warm faithful heart ! why will you forever force me to repeat that I am poor ; a word which I like not to pronounce or to hear pronounced, for it usually betokens blind as well pusillanimous complaint or else false boastful cant ; either of which I would willingly avoid ? This word has many meanings, which it is most painful and ungracious in me to explain, but which it is indispensably important in your selected and allotted station that you thoroughly understand.

I despair of doing anything but vex you by this Letter ; for let us talk as we will we are not understood. . . . I *see* in my judgement that you have many causes of offence connected with Haddington, but I cannot *feel* them as you do. To me, among the weightier evils and blessings of existence, the evil of impertinent visitors and so forth, seems but as a small drop in the bucket and an exceeding little thing. I have nerve enough in me to dispatch that sort of deer¹ forever by dozens in the day. Yet think not that I would restrain (or by this time it may be undo) your projected removal from your native Town. The fancied happiness of living there was founded on the thought that you too would be happier ; without this, Haddington was no heaven to me either.

Do you call me wilful and capricious ? I fear much you do, and yet, believe me, Jane, if I could find any wilfulness or selfish whim in this Letter, I would put it into the fire, and write another. It is hard enough that you must hear the stern truth connected with our circumstances ; it were too hard if you had likewise to bear any ill-nature in revealing them.

¹ That is, “the callers by profession,” whose “most vile voices,” Miss Welsh had told Carlyle, she “valued not a straw.”— See *ante*, Letter 86.

Conceive me, figure out my situation! But alas you cannot, let me exhibit it as I will. After all, however, this is but a secondary matter, whether good *words* are spoken and appear to be spoken, if so be that good *actions* be done. With this view I have written you my purposes, be the grounds of them truly seen or not.

The grand question still remains: what is to be done? For aught that during brief intervals from business I have yet been able to think, it seems to me that our fair *plan* has again shrunk back into the rank of *project*. I see and feel too that till after a full fair and free utterance of our hearts to one another, neither I nor your Mother nor you will ever work to each other's service. I *will* speak clearly and cordially to our Mother, as to a kind counsellor and helper, and like a man that wishes and means heartily well to her and hers. Am I not open to light and is not she? Am not I and all that I have the possession of her Child, as her Child is of me? We need only to understand each other thoroughly; and from our united judgements and resources a fair enough arrangement will arise.

Can she and you, if you have determined on quitting Haddington, go and take a house for *yourselves* in Edinburgh? It will be the better for your Mother's occupation, if she think of giving it to us when we wed. Here I shall see you, and tell you everything; and do everything which a rational and well-meaning man can engage for. I am to be there at all events when this Book is published; sooner would not be impossible, but very inconvenient. . . .

As to my taste in houses, it is the easiest thing on Earth to fit. One sole indispensable and per-

manent property is complete quietude by night, such quietude that I can sleep in it. Will you believe it, this most humble requisite is fully nine-tenths of the comfort I anticipate and have enjoyed from owning a house. In *all* other points, my taste is of the most catholic description, and my toleration absolutely boundless. But with nocturnal noises I would turn my back on the Tuileries itself. . . .

For the rest, to Morningside, or any other quarter in Edinburgh or out of it, I am perfectly well-disposed ; there is absolutely no point whatever in which I could possibly differ from your Mother or any other civilized European person.

But I must finish : for my time and paper are done. I have given you my thoughts and purposes crude as they were. The arrangement of things now rests with yourself and your Mother. I think *you* should go to Edinburgh, since your tastes are so decided against Haddington : but for *us* to attempt housekeeping there on these principles, would for the present, I think, be delusion. This I must say, tho' I feel that you will sadly misinterpret it. Be kind, be tolerant, be just to me, till you have *heard* me. If we are wise and true all will yet be well, if we are foolish and false it cannot. I could write volumes, and it would all mean that I wish to be true and just to you, and happy in your happiness, and forever your own,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 162

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 6th May, 1826.

MEINE EWIG LIEBSTE [My ever best-loved],—
Why do you not write to me? Is it purpose? Is it necessity? Negligence it cannot be: for doubtless you duly appreciate the deep anxiety I necessarily feel about this most important event of my life and yours; and I know you too well to imagine that you could keep me one needless moment in such uncertainty. Nevertheless I have sent to the Post-office every day this week, in vain; the long-looked-for messenger comes over the Hill empty-handed, without any tidings hopeful or despondent, consolatory or criminative, from the quarter where they are most eagerly expected.

This trial of my patience is the sharper, as for the last five days I have been totally idle; and accordingly prepared without much sacrifice to come and see you face to face, if such a step were desired or necessary for the adjustment of this very serious negotiation. The books I talked of as having come from Germany turn out to be an *Invoice of Books*, the Books themselves being still somewhere on the road between Leipzig and this: the printing therefore is just about to stop, I myself am already stopped. Meanwhile the East-wind has given me a horrid cold: I am idle and sick, and Jane will not write. Behold, all these things are against me!

Among the manifold hypotheses which I have

formed to account for your silence, it has not failed to strike me that perhaps you are angry with me, that you felt yourself injured by my last Letter, and were taking that method of reducing me to reason. I trust in Heaven it is not so. O my Darling, you must not do this! What were it, but to complicate our affairs still farther, which are already complicated enough? To employ our force against each other, for less than no purpose, instead of with each other, against the many difficulties that beset us? If the manner of that Letter was offensive to you, I can say with a clear heart that it was a most involuntary sin: and for the matter of it, this was the true copy of my best judgement at the time; and I knew not how to serve you more honestly than by communicating it without reserve. Do you imitate me: know your own mind, and lay it calmly before me; one way or other the two shall be reconciled. To my *foolishness* I seek no mercy from you, and will show none myself: but of my *good sense* think that however repulsive it is to you, it may have been no less so to myself; and is now not to be cavilled at but patiently to be tried, and if found worthy, to be strengthened and completed by good sense of your own. Believe me, my Love, a wise advice from you, would be *more* precious to me than as wise a plan which I had formed myself. But to divide yourself from me, and sit apart from me as from a hostile influence! O Jane! If it is so, let me entreat you, pressingly implore you, to let it be so no longer! . . . For my sake, for your own, for the sake of true and wise conduct dear to both of us, I will ask you, I will beg you, to write without one instant's delay from such a cause.

Perhaps, after all, this is only hypochondria, and

some other reason restrains you: for in all the history of our affection, I can recollect no instance in which you have acted from such motives. Another theory I have formed is that you are sick, and cannot write to me. Alas! this is no whit better than the other. For God's sake let me know truly how it is! Write to me without delay, if our common interests are still dear to you. On Thursday I expect to be completely disengaged from employment. Nothing that you can calmly propose to me will not find a ready and wistful hearing.

I am for ever and ever,

Your own,

T. CARLYLE.

I am sick and confused in a thousand ways, and must write no more tonight, were it only that time fails me. O my Beloved, you are forever dear to me, betide us what may! I could write volumes, and this, as always, would be the meaning of them. I beg of you again and again to send me one line, or even half a line, if you can write no more. It may be here on Wednesday: till then I will not ask for it, or look for it!

My maturest notion after all is that you are sick. God help us, and pity us! Send for me instantly, if my presence can possibly do you good. I will write *Espérance!* *Espérance!* for I know in whom I have trusted. Adieu, my Dearest! A thousand goodnights!

LETTER 163

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Hoddam Hill

HADDINGTON, Tuesday, '9th May, 1826.'

DEAREST, — I could not possibly write yesterday as you desired, being ill of one of my very worst headaches ; even today I am still far from well, and consequently very stupid ; but no matter, I must just come as I am, for it would be unkind to keep you waiting another Post. This, however, is the first bad turn I have had for several weeks ; so let thy heart be comforted, my Beloved. It is not sickness that has kept me so long silent. No, nor anger either. That your last Letter vexed me I will not attempt to deny ; but it was sorrow that I felt at it, not anger. And I could have taken you to my heart, while weeping over these hard sayings, just the same as if I had got all my own way. The truth of the matter is simply this : in the state of hopeless uncertainty into which you and my Mother together had plunged me back from what seemed the very summit of waking bliss, I felt myself utterly at a loss what I should either say or do next ; and so have been waiting on, in a sort of desperate negligence until you or she, or Providence perhaps, should pour some ray of light into the midnight darkness of my inward world. This was very wrong, I find. Forgive me for the uneasiness I have caused you. — “*Ceased to love you !*” Oh, thou of little faith !

And now, most obdurate of Unbelievers, will you sit down in good-nature at your desk, and tell

me plainly what on all this earth we are to do? Are we to be married or no? And if we are, where are we to take up house; in Annandale, in Edinburgh or where? *Here*, I have said, I *will* not live; and said it not without reasonable grounds and slow deliberation. But no other arrangement can you propose to me which I am not quite ready to acquiesce in. My Mother's project I cheerfully give up, if you still think it so unsuitable to our circumstances; indeed, I would not have so much as laid it before you, had I not believed it certain to meet *your* wishes and purposes. For Edinburgh, or any other great City, to *me* has no attractions. On the contrary I would prefer the Country much before it; because *there* I should have you more entirely to myself, and might live more entirely for the things I most love. But I much doubt if the Country be the fitter place for *you*, if the life of solitude and love, which would be heaven for me, would not for you become too soon a weariness. *That* do you determine.

One thing I must entreat of you: if the thought of maintaining a Wife begins to press more hard on you than you at first supposed it would, hesitate not to tell me that we must live apart till a more auspicious season; but if not, if you are still determined to make me your own at all haps and hazards, for Heaven's sake, Dearest, speak not another word to me about your *poverty*. Every such word comes home to me with the force of a *reproach*. And truly this poverty is a circumstance of which I need not to be any more warned; for I have long since looked it full in the face, and left it out in none of my calculations. Even when I proposed our taking up house in Edinburgh, it had by

no means escaped my recollection that we should be very poor. But I understood it [to be] my Mother's intention to *provide* as well as furnish a house for us; and for the rest, I imagined we might live as cheaply in the vicinity of Edinburgh as in most other places, — more cheaply for certain than in Haddington, where living is extraordinarily dear. But my Mother's meaning is generally so light and changeful that it is not always possible to catch it and hold it fast. And thus on the present occasion it had almost slipped through my fingers. One thing I am sure of: she would rather give the furniture of this house to you and I than sell it to any other, which must be done if we have no house to put it in. Further than this we must not lay our account with her assistance, tho' it is more than probable that it will not fail us. Why (you think) not make her speak plainly out, and say at once what it is she will do, so that we may shape our course accordingly? Alas, Dearest, in the delicate relation in which I stand with my Mother, such a proceeding, natural in another, would in me be an ungracious, ungenerous resumption of my rights; would counteract in one instant all the pains I have taken for years to make her utterly forget her dependence on me. — Was ever poor girl in such an intricate situation? — Consider it my Friend, and help me; for I cannot help myself.

We go to Edinburgh the day after tomorrow, to pay some tiresome visits. Send your Letter to John, who will know where to find me, — which is more than I know at present myself. We shall be absent a fortnight, perhaps longer. I should like well to see you face to face; but I could have no right enjoyment of your society in Edinburgh; and

I see not that your coming at present would effect anything which may not be as well effected by writing.

The bargain with Dr. Fyffe is still in the wind: the Dr., like many other pitiable persons, being very eager to have the merchandise, but equally loth to give the price.

You will hardly be able to make sense of what I have written; but in truth I am almost blind as well as stupid with headache; and so hurried besides, for I have been several times interrupted.— God bless you, Darling!

I am ever devotedly yours,

JANE B. WELSH.

Write immediately I beseech you.

LETTER 164

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

HODDAM HILL, 13th May, 1826.

DEAREST AND TRUEST OF BELIEVERS,— I owe you many thanks for your Letter, which relieved me from a multitude of half-imaginary distresses. Let me beg of you whatever you do not to fall into any of your “negligent desperations” again: remember the maxim of philosophy *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; for here it is not *nothing* but *something*, and that a very good thing too, that will serve our turn.

If I was disappointed in anything connected with your Letter, it was that you did not forthwith order me into your presence; not to enjoy your society, but to take deepest counsel touching the state of our affairs, and to determine *viva voce*, and once for all, about

what is to be done. I had a week of perfect idleness ; and my arrangements were all made for starting for Haddington the moment your Letter should arrive. Such a chance may not return for a long time : however, the present one is lost ; and indeed your order at this time could not have recalled it ; for I understand the German Books, which I have waited for so long, to be lying for me this morning at the Post-office of Ecclefechan ; and a journey to the North in such a case would have been but a game at cross-purposes. It is better I am not gone. For eight weeks, I must labour like a hireling : if I have done even then I shall think it good work.

Yet I doubt greatly if we shall prosper by Letters ; there is something sadly ineffectual in epistolary correspondence for such a purpose. I come miserably ill at writing on this theme : it is a great and most frequently abortive labour to express at once kindly and distinctly what I want. This vigorous formal statement of our own sovereign will and pleasure carries in it something so like selfishness, that we are apt to become selfish in our fear of being suspected of it. Would you believe it, I cannot *love* you in a Letter of that kind. No, *Liebchen*, I do not love thee at all, when talking of houses and poverty and so forth : and I long to give the Letter to the Devil and take thee in my arms, and force thee by the very look of my eyes to say in that wicked heart of thine that thou wilt go with me to live in Greenland if I like. Alas ! and I must take to this sorry work again ! Well, let me trust it is the *last* time ; for really having said this, I see not that I have anything more to say. Attend to it, with an open and considerate mind.

I have not altered my calculations as to the ex-

pense of supporting a wife ; nor has my wish to call my Dearest by that dear name any whit abated. I know as I before knew that wives are supported, some in peace and dignity, others in contention and disgrace, according to their wisdom or their folly, on all incomes from £14 a-year to two hundred thousand : and I trusted in Jane Welsh and still trust in her for good sense enough to accommodate her wants to the means of the man she has chosen before all others, and to live with him contented on whatever it should please Providence to allot him, keeping within their revenue, not struggling to get without it, and therefore *rich*, by whatever arithmetical symbol, whether tens, hundreds or thousands, that same revenue might be expressed. This is not impossible or even very difficult, provided the will be truly there. Say what we like, it is in general our stupidity that makes us straitened and contemptible. The sum of money is a very secondary matter. One of the happiest, most praiseworthy and really most enviable families on the Earth at present lives within two bow-shots of me, that of Wightman the Hedger,¹ on the produce of fifteen pence *per diem*, which the man earns peacefully with his mattock and his bill, not counting himself any philosopher for so doing. Their cottage on our Hill is tidy as a cabinet ; they have a black-eyed boy whom few squires can paral-

¹ Carlyle's biographer waxes indignant, even truculent, at Carlyle for daring to mention the Wightman family in this connection. But Carlyle never intended or proposed to make a Mrs. Wightman of Jane Welsh ! His proposal was (see Letter 159 *ante*) to provide for Mrs. Carlyle not only an experienced servant, but also to bring in his clever little Sister Jean to help her in the housekeeping. With a good servant and an assistant housekeeper, and only one man to wait on, Mrs. Carlyle's household duties would have been light enough !

lel; their *girnlel*¹ is always full of meal; the man is a true honest most wisely conditioned man, an Elder of the Congregation, and meekly but firmly persuaded that he shall go to Heaven when his hedging here below is done. "What want these knaves that a King should have?"² It is not miscalculation of expenses, then, that frightens me; the perplexity arises from other misunderstandings.

I mentioned with due solemnity to my Father and Mother the mighty event that was hanging in the wind; and received from them, what I had anticipated, an affectionate assent to our purpose; but at the same time a foreboding from both that at Scotsbrig even in Summer it would be difficult for you to *do*, in Winter altogether impossible. This Winter part of it I had myself calculated on; but the means of obviating the inconvenience, taking a furnished house in Edinburgh at the beginning of the season, I saw too well was not to be depended on, with my present knowledge of the matter, resulting solely from a casual phrase of Dr. Brewster's, and incapable in my present circumstances of being cleared up by investigation on the spot. At the same time it was too clear that you totally misconceived the condition of Scotsbrig and our only possible manner of existence there. You

¹ A chest for holding meal; probably the word is derived from the French "*grenier*," a granary.

² "What wants that knave that a king suld have, but the sword of honour and the crown?" exclaimed James V. on beholding, in his splendid equipage, the celebrated outlaw, Johnnie Armstrong, of Gilnockie.— See "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border," by Sir Walter Scott, i. 392. (R. Cadell, Edinburgh, 1850.)

Cf. "What want these outlaws conquerors should have?"

"Childe Harold Canto iii. st. 48.

talked of your Mother visiting us !¹ By Day and Night ! it would astonish her to see this same household. O no, my Darling ! your Mother must not visit mine. What good were it ? By an utmost exertion on the part of both, they might learn perhaps to tolerate each other, more probably to pity and partially dislike each other ; better than mutual tolerance I could anticipate nothing from them, and is there not the fullest tolerance existing between them already without effort ? The mere idea of such a visit augured too plainly that you knew *nothing* of the family circle in which for my sake you were ready to take a place.

What then was to be done ? Instantly the vacant house at Haddington occurred to my recollection like a sort of God-send expressly suited for our purpose. It seemed so easy, and on other accounts so indispensable, to let it stand undisposed of for another year, that I doubted not one moment but the whole matter was arranged. If it turned out, which I reckoned to be impossible if you were not distracted in mind, that you really liked better to front the splashes and puddles and thousand inclemencies of Scotsbrig thro' Winter than live another six months in the house where you had lived all your days, it was the simplest process imaginable to stay where we were : the loss was but of a few months' rent for your Mother's house, and

¹ It is easy to read between the lines that the Scotsbrig people had not welcomed the proposed frequent visits of a lady of such variable humours as Mrs. Welsh, while all and sundry from the youngest to the oldest were busy in their every-day garb with the rough and varied work necessary in Scottish mixed-farming. Miss Welsh, too, had told Carlyle (Letter 157, *ante*) that her mother's "presence *there* would be a perpetual cloud over our little world of love and peace," and that "for the sake of all concerned, it would be necessary to keep her quite apart from us."

the certainty it gave us made it great gain. Even yet I cannot with the whole force of my vast intellect understand how my project has failed. Have I miscalculated my importance to you Jane? No, I swear I have not: and I will venture to say that if you seriously ask your heart, it will tell you that to get possession of me your elected and predestined Husband is really a far better thing than to get quit of Haddington. Is it not, now? I wish not to undervalue your objections to this place, or your opinion on any subject whatever: but I may confess my inability, with my present knowledge, to reconcile this very peremptory distaste with your usual good sense and your deep entire and most precious love of me. I cannot with my utmost imagining discover any rock of offence in Haddington, which I have not to front here, which persons intent on living wisely will and must have to front everywhere, and will everywhere also contrive with no great pains to remove out of their way. Impertinent visitors! Let us not name it again, my Love; for in the circle of difficulties and duties into which you will soon be introduced, this difficulty will vanish like thin smoke in the tempest of the elements. . . .

But after all there must be something in the matter which I do not see. Your Mother and you are no unwise or uncalculating persons: and that you should both wilfully strip yourselves of a home, and stand in a few weeks houseless in the world, merely for certain dislikes of place and so forth, which among the actual ruggednesses of life one very speedily learns the necessity of disregarding, seems to me entirely inconceivable.

Let me beg of you therefore to reconsider the

business. . . . Decide for your own happiness ; and believe me, Darling, I will acquiesce quietly in the result whatever it may be. But I must repeat that without this house, or some equivalent of the same sort, I have yet no place for our marriage. Scots-brig (of which by the way our obtaining at all was dubious when I wrote last, and only became certain two days ago) is unknown to you ; but I know it and the nature of life there ; and it becomes me to say in both our names that there we cannot live for any length of time with either comfort or wisdom. If the house were to be my own, tile-kiln as it is, I should let you venture on it ; but even this is not the case ; for I am not head there so much as partner, — first-partner, but no absolute ruler.

When I speak of Haddington and living there, you must not suspect me of love for that obnoxious burgh. Except one fair denizen of it, I know nothing which it ever produced that I would give three cherry-stones for. . . . But what then, the poor place is not to be blamed for this : God's fair sky stretches over it, his winds visit it, and his waters refresh it, like other places ; and it offers an asylum to my loved One and me, for which I should be grateful to Nova Zembla or Cayenne. Propose me a substitute of the same conveniency elsewhere, and I shall cheerfully engage never to set foot in Haddington any more. A house in Edinburgh on the same principles I should like infinitely better : but not having it, and having the other, I should be a fool, it seems to me, if I determined otherwise.

Can you not procure for us such a house in Edinburgh ? Can you not revise your judgement in regard to Haddington ? Can you devise no equivalent for it in any part of our resources ?

Then alas! we must just wait till these our resources increase, or we have learned to be contented with their indeed very scanty product. Really, my Love, this does seem so true and plain, that I cannot but feel as if in talking to you one quarter of an hour on the subject I *must* bring you altogether over to my own opinion. I have never found you walk by whims and crotchets, but by your best perception, which you were always eager to have strengthened and enlightened, of what was true and advisable. Yet believe not that I wish to control your will: I would not plead in this matter; but rather have you to enter upon it with your own entire conviction, seeing it is still a matter of conjecture to us both, and certainly the most important we can well have to decide upon.

You talk with doubt and hesitation about "assistance" from your Mother. Indeed, indeed, my Dearest, we do nowise require assistance from her. Providence (glory to His name!) has made me sufficient for myself; and if I pray to Him, it is not for more money, but for more wisdom, with which even less money would be sufficient. As it is, I have little disposition to solicit or expect assistance from any mortal, and I believe just as little need as disposition. By the cunning of my own right hand, I can earn for myself and those that like to depend on me, sufficient food and raiment: I ride my own serviceable courser along his Majesty's highways, as free a subject as wears them; owing no man anything but love; hating no one, fearing no one; and not so stinted even that on occasion I cannot part my morsel with a "needier fellow-man," and cause the heart of the poor to bless me. There are many Squires and

Dukes in this world that cannot say so much. Now if your Mother see good to express the generous affections of her heart towards her Daughter and her Daughter's Husband by gifts of money and the like, it shall be well; and far be it from me, by any pitiful vanity, to refuse such bounties, or the payment of them by feelings correspondent to the feelings of which these beneficences are the symbol. But if she shall not see good so to express the generous affections of her heart, believe me, it shall also be well: I will think merely that she has found other more desirable investments; and without pretending to the smallest right of criticism over her conduct, shall remember, as I have often endeavoured to do, that she is the Mother, and all things considered, the praiseworthy Mother of my own fair philosopher, whose heart if she will but be true and wise is worth more to me than all the ingots of El Dorado. Therefore, *Liebchen*, if you would not put my "magnanimity" to the test, let me think that you consider me indifferent as nearly as may be, so far as I myself am concerned, to any pecuniary determination on the part of any man or woman. Oh! there are a thousand things in such a life as this, which notwithstanding all you say of *poverty*, you yet understand only in words; but you will yet know them all both sweet and bitter; the bitter I cannot ward from you; and the sweet I will teach you, for you are of a teachable spirit, and *cannot* but choose wisdom in place of folly when the two are laid down before you. But let us beware of cant, and so drop this head of method!

As I said, I request, desire or expect nothing from your Mother but the load of this house for one

year: if she will not give it, or you will not have it, and can find no means of supplying its place, what remains but that we each content him where he is, in expectation of better times? I live in Scotsbrig, you and your Mother in — simply not in Haddington, it appears; for of all the rest I am utterly ignorant, utterly unable to form any plausible theory.

“What tig-tagging,” my Mother says, “an’ a’ comes to *ae* sheal-door at last!” Heaven grant it were safely arrived there! at this *one* door! For the present I can do no more to help it forward, but must off for my Books, and into the free air. So with a true warm kiss which I send you over the hills, and one soft pressure of your bosom to mine, I bid my own Jane goodnight for the present. I will throw you a word on Monday.

Tuesday afternoon. Dearest, — I found not only a load of Books on Saturday, but *eight* Proof-sheets besides; the consideration and alteration of which, attended with other sorry enough drawbacks, has kept me occupied till the present hour. Henceforth nothing but fireman haste awaits me, for week after week.

I have read over this Letter: there is nothing that I can add to it; or rather I could go on adding to it forever. The sum of the matter lies here, however; do you consider it, and determine; for with you the determination rests; you behold the extent of my present means, and if these cannot suffice us, I can do nothing more. . . . My whole mind in one word is this: I think it were better for us both if we were wedded; Haddington I dislike very cordially as a place, but could live there, happily I doubt not, along with you; Edinburgh I should

greatly prefer on all accounts, but see not and know not how or whether so convenient a footing in it is to be obtained. . . .

It will be necessary to submit this matter to your Mother; but for the mode of doing it, I confess myself unable to give you any good advice. *Plain-dealing*, except when there is *evil-meaning* seldom does harm: I recommend it in all such cases; and between a Mother and a Daughter, it is certainly doubly and trebly recommendable. Be you just and rational; and let your Mother see that you are so; and furthermore that it is for her Love not her money that you are anxious; being, as it behooves you to be after what has come and gone, *independent* of her help in a pecuniary point of view, and this not in words only but in very deed, by readiness to take up with the humbler resource, rather than solicit her for the higher. I beg of you to be calm and discreet in your consideration and your management of this concern; and I pray God to lead it to a happy end. You will write *soon*. I am forever your own,

T. CARLYLE.

LETTER 165

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

SCOTSBRIG 18th June, 1826.

LIEBSTES! — I must not let this day pass without sending you a word, else you may have to wait another week, and the next vacant day may find me as unready as the present. This parched Lydian wind blowing thro' my crazy apartment where I

sleep and write (the carpenters are all dozing) has given me a cold and sore throat; and the printers of the Ballantyne Office leave me no rest night or day. To write sense is out of the question; so for this time, you must be content with a line or two of nonsense.

How many thousand thoughts might your last Letter¹ give rise to! We *are*, it seems, to begin this wonderful married life; a scene so strange to both of us, so full of hazards, and it may be of highest happiness! May the Fates award the latter; as they will, if we deserve it. I could write and say volumes on the subject, for to me it seems great and momentous (in our little destiny) and requiring deepest thought from both of us. But why should I? We shall *talk* it all over shortly, in its whole breadth and length; when I am free of this Egyptian bondage for a week or two, and able to think of something else than Novels and Novelists with their long *etceteras* of stupid consequences. All I say is: Fear nothing; I will see you in a few weeks (perhaps in six) and arrange the whole matter: and then — *das Weitere wird sich geben* [the rest will follow in due course], and we shall be wedded and happy, come of it what may.

I have called my task an Egyptian bondage; but that was a splenetic word, and came not from the heart but from the sore throat; for I have not been so happy for many a year, as since I began this undertaking on my own strength and in my own home: and is it not to have a *termination* which scarcely an Epic Poem could deserve? O my little *Weibchen*! The next Book I write, *another* shall help me to correct and arrange! And my fairest

¹ This Letter has not been preserved.

recompense will be the glad look of two kind black eyes, thro' which a soul is looking that belongs to my soul forever and ever! Let us not despond in the life of honourable toil which lies before us. Do you not think, that when you on one side of our household shall have faithfully gone thro' your housewife duties, and I on the other shall have written my allotted pages, we shall meet over our frugal meal with far happier and prouder hearts than thousands that are not blessed with any duty, and whose agony is the bitterest of all, "the agony of a too easy bed"?¹ In labour lies health, of body and of mind; in suffering and difficulty is the soil of all virtue and all wisdom. By and by, when we have put our house in order, and our hearts in order, and come to understand one another as indivisible portions of the same whole, I predict that we shall be the finest little Pair imaginable! A true-hearted dainty lady-wife; a sick and sulky, but diligent, and not false-hearted or fundamentally unkind goodman: and these two fronting the hardships of life in faithful and eternal union, conquering the evils of their lot by wise effort and perseverance, and every conquest not for *self* but for *another self* far dearer! Let us but be true and good, and we have nothing earthly to dread.

As to the *wedding*, I agree with you in heartily recoiling from it. Pity indeed that we could not both fall asleep, and awaken married! It would be infinitely finer and far less trouble. Nevertheless the Fairies will not do this for us: we must be wed-

¹ Cf. "Stretched on the rack of a too easy chair,
And heard thy everlasting yawn confess
The pains and penalties of idleness." —

POPE, "Dunciad," Bk. iv. ll. 342-4.

ded with our eyes open, by some flesh and blood minister of the Church of Scotland, and join hands "before many witnesses," and whisk away in post-chaises, and in short suffer a short [taste] of Purgatory, before we can expect to arrive in Heaven. We shall go thro' it all, however, I doubt not: and then the Heaven is awaiting us, more sweet from the transition.

At the present moment I am wonderfully in the dark about arrangements and possibilities of arrangement. Here in my Eremite seclusion, I know nothing, and hear nothing; and the whole world into which I am so soon to enter is lying before me like a far-off cloudy vision. Will you write to me at length and leisure, and tell me all that *you* know about it. *Where* is this house? In Edinburgh or out of it? What is it like? Among other houses or apart from them? When is it to be ready? When does Fyffe take possession? And a thousand other whens and hows — which after all, I shall never learn to any purpose till I see you face to face.

Tell me at anyrate what you are doing at present. How spending your time. Learning from your Mother the elements of house-wifery? I think she should make you *mistress* for a month; under such superintendence, I could become a very moderate housekeeper in a month myself. I could bet considerable sums that you never think of *me* at present — except by accident.

After all, this Edinburgh arrangement is much better than any other could have been. A *writing* character is wonderfully out of place in rustic society. Here in Annandale, for instance, I have simply *no* association with fellow creatures at all, except within the threshold of my own habitation. I speak to the

honest rustics out of doors: I even talk to them, for half-hours when I cannot help it; and they think I am a *queer* or it may be a *very decent sensible* young man; but alas, alas! the heart sits solitary in its own lone chamber, and no voice addresses it, no ear hears it. Some days I grow very dreamy, sometimes rather sad. This morning, while buckling my stock, I recollected purchasing it in the Snar-gate of Dover; then came the Cliffs of that ancient seahaven, and Paris, and London and the forges of Brummagem, all mustering before me like visions of some spectral country, overcast with the paleness of Separation, and lovelier than they were to the bodily eye!—I went down, and had some warm tea, the best Christian comfort¹ within my reach.

I am babbling very sadly: but I must not close my Letter without telling you something more precise respecting the *great event*. I come to Edinburgh and to you, when once this Book is done. I am about fifth way gone in the last volume; the printers are nearly done with the preceding one. It is very full of small cares, the process of manufacturing it; but I go along contentedly: for I reckon it tho' a poor enough affair, yet an innocent even a laudable one; and considerably the best sample of German genius that has yet been presented to the English. And who can blame me for a little satisfaction in the thought, that even I, poor I, here in the wolds of Annandale am doing somewhat to instruct the thinkers of my own Country to do justice to those of another? Well, I calculate that this Book, if I am diligent which I have cause enough to be, will be over in about five or six weeks. I come to Edinburgh then, to devise some other

¹ See "New Letters and Memorials," i, 22, *note*.

enterprise, to see you, and settle with you once for all the preliminares and paraphernalia of this our magnificent Enterprise! Till then I despair of thinking any reasonable thought about this or any other matter: what with "estimates of genius," what with estimates of housekeeping, and dreams of a wicked little gypsy that haunts me, and solemn hopes and fears, and magnificent and unfathomable anticipations, — I declare my head is entirely overset, and has for the time being given up the reins of management into other hands — those of Habit, I suppose, and Imagination.

You however have time, and will write and think for us both. Write at anyrate, whether you can think or not. Never mind your *déshabille*. — Our poor stock of Letters is now drawing to a close: soon, I shall send you news by readier conveyance; in place of scolding me, you shall slap me; in place of praising me, you shall kiss me. *Es werden glückliche Zeiten seyn* [there will be happy times]! — My Mother turned back the other night on her road to Mainhill, for the purpose of charging me to send you "her best love," and "put it into words myself." It cannot be in better words, for it comes from a true unpretending heart. You must also write to her, as soon as possible: she has asked me twenty times, if there was no word of a Letter for *her*? I promised that there would be one in good time. Do all this, and love me with your whole heart, and be a good girl and *mine* for ever.

I am always your own

T. CARLYLE.

I should have thanked your Mother for her splendid *Cowper*; a fair gift, and fairer for the

meaning it carries. I have been getting *deeply* in her debt of late. Say all that is grateful and affectionate to her, in my name.—Have you written to the Noble Lady? If not, I wish you would; and say, in due time she shall hear of me too.

LETTER 166

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

HADDINGTON, 28th June, '1826.'

DEAREST,—I know not what in all the world to say to you: I cannot write now-a-days; I cannot think; my head and heart are in an endless whirl which no words can express. In short this marriage, I find, is like death: so long as it is uncertain in its approach, one can expect it with a surprising indifference; but certain, looked in the face within a definite term, it becomes a matter of most tremendous interest. Yet think not that I wish it but as it is. No! "*Ce que j'ai fait je le ferois encore*" [What I have done I would do again]; for if I am not without fear, my hope is far greater than my fear.

Oh yes, the whole arrangement will do excellently well; at least it will be our own faults, if it does not. Our anticipated happiness is founded on no delusion: it is no love-dream from which we must wake the first year of our marriage. In good sooth, we were either the stupidest or most deceitful of all living, if at this time of day, we had *yet* to know each other as we are. It is now five years since we first met—five blessed years! During all that period my opinion of you has never *wavered*, but gone on deliberately rising to a higher and

higher degree of regard ; and (what perhaps is still more convincing of its well-groundedness) in the seventeen months that I have held myself your affianced Wife,¹ I have never for a single instant doubted the wisdom of my choice. Nor has *your* attachment proved itself less steadfast than mine, tho' far more unaccountable. For you have loved me, not in blindness of my thousand faults, but in spite of them ; for the sake of my one redeeming grace, the faith that is in me. Oh, without doubt, we shall be as happy as the day's long ; happier in our little home at Comley Bank than kings and queens amid the gilding of Palaces.² Are you believing ? I could easily convince you with my eyes and my kisses ; but ink-words are so ineloquent !

With respect to this same house, it is by no

¹ That is, since January, 1825, when Carlyle made his proposal of marriage.

² Here is a little glimpse into the Comley Bank household in the early weeks of marriage, which coming at first hand, from an eyewitness, may be not uninteresting to readers. The writer is Mrs. Welsh's Family Lawyer, Mr. Alexander Donaldson, of Haddington. He writes in December, 1826, to Mrs. Welsh at Templand, Thornhill :

" . . . I was delighted to see Jeannie in her own house. I met with a welcome truly cordial and affectionate both from her and Mr. Carlyle. You do not need that I should speak in *his* praise, for I have known him well enough to appreciate his worth ; but others more ignorant have been exceedingly gratified on becoming better acquainted with him. I have had no opportunity of repeating my visit, but this I shall do ere long, and I will not lose any occasion, when I have even a few minutes to spare, of paying my respects. Jeannie spoke of coming to see us *sans ceremonie*, but she has not yet made good her promise, tho' we are all impatience to see her in her new character." He finds Jeannie changed only for the better, and ends by saying : " A kind-hearted, sensible person cannot surely be a bit the worse of being intimately connected with one of kindred sentiments."



21 COMLEY BANK

means everything one might wish; but it is by much the most suitable that could be got: — particularly in situation, — being within a few minutes' walk of the Town, and at the same time well out of the smoke and bustle. Indeed it would be quite country-looking, only that it is one of a range. For there is a real flowergarden in front, overshadowed by a fair-spreading tree; while the windows look out on the greenest fields with never a street to be seen. As for interior accommodation: there are a diningroom and drawingroom (we must adopt the usual names, for want of more appropriate diminutives), three sleepingrooms, a kitchen and more closets than I see the least occasion for, — unless you design to be another Blue-beard. So you see we shall have apartments enough and to spare, — on a small scale indeed, almost laughably small. But if this is no objection in your eyes, neither is it any in mine. The smaller the rooms, the easier to warm and light and arrange them. And then the rent is only £32 a-year, which my Mother can easily spare, and which I therefore need not blush to take.¹ Besides, by and by, if all goes well, we may perhaps dispense with even this assistance. Strange is it not, that I should like better to be a burden on you than on my own Mother!

¹ There never was occasion for Mrs. Welsh to pay any part of the rent of 21 Comley Bank. At the end of 1826 she did kindly send the young couple money, but it was immediately returned with thanks. Writing to his mother at the end of 1826, Carlyle says: "Of money we are not in want. The other morning Mrs. Welsh sent us a Letter with Sixty Pounds enclosed, fearing lest cleanness of teeth might be ready to overtake us! I thought it extremely kind and handsome, but we returned the cash with many thanks, wishing to 'fight our own battle,' at least till the season of need arrive."

My Cousin Phœbe Baillie came to us yesterday ; and on the length of her stay here depends the length of ours ; for so soon as she is fairly gone, we must set about the miserable work of removing. Possibly we shall be in Edinburgh before you are ; at anyrate we will meet there, or else in Nithsdale ; for here in the present posture of affairs is no place for us.

I wrote to Mrs. Montagu two weeks since, in answer to a second Letter from her, the kindest most interesting Letter ! I do love her very cordially. I see James Johnstone frequently, as often as possible, for he talks to me about *you*. So far as he explains himself, he is well enough content with his condition here ; but I much fear he will not continue so to the end. John writes to me in the kindest manner, and manages our affairs in Edinburgh. He is a treasure of a Brother.

My most affectionate regards to your Mother. I would gladly write to her ; but how can I in the absurd situation I am in at present ? Remember me also to Jane and the rest.

I am forever your own,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 167

T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, Haddington

SCOTSBRIG, 19th July, 1826.

MY DEAREST,—Had we been young lovers, just commencing the process of courtship, you might have had just cause to take exception against so long a silence in return for so kind and altogether balmy a

Letter as your last ; nay, perhaps in your wrath, to pay me off and cashier me finally, as an ungrateful and ungainly subject. But you see, we are old lovers just finishing the process of courtship, and going to be married ; and so poor Jane cannot for her life get any vent for her fierce rage against me, and I stand sword-proof before her, shielded in her own arms against all perils whatsoever. Blessed state for an honest man to be in ! The little Bird of Paradise is *mine*, and her home is in my bosom (pray Heaven it may be a happy one !), and no power shall snatch her from me.

The truth is, my good Jane, the longer I am in writing, the sooner shall I be in coming ; the fewer Letters I give you, the sooner shall I give you myself. I have been writing wonderfully, with sublime effort, which as usual destroys my little fraction of health, and after a short continuance leaves me unfit for anything. By and by I shall learn wisdom in this as in other matters : to me health is more important than all imaginable philosophy ; and were it not that philosophy teaches the recovery of health as her first maxim, she would not avail three straws. Even yet, make me thoroughly sick for three days, and without the prospect of improvement (which, however, I can now hardly be without), I were still as miserable a man as need be ; half as miserable as ever I was. But what then ? I throw my books to the ground, and myself into the fields and open breezes ; and swear that no man or thing shall torment me any longer in *that* flame ; and so in brief space my prison doors are unbolted, and I am again as of old.

It is thus that the "mind of man" can learn to command the most complex destiny ; and like an

experienced steersman (to speak in a most original figure) to steer its bark thro' all imaginable currents, undercurrents, quicksands, reefs and stormy weather. By and by, *Liebchen*, you will have to take the helm by turns yourself; for it is to be a victualled ship, no single-man canoe! What royal way we shall make — that is, provided we do not upset! No, my own Lassie, we will not upset; but act wisely, and love one another not in *words* but in *deeds* (one of which is worth five thousand words), and courageously make front together against all the grievances of our lot. Here are two swallows in the corner of my window that have taken a house (not at Comley Bank) this summer; and, in spite of drought and bad crops, are bringing up a family together with the highest contentment and unity of soul. Surely, surely, Jane Welsh and Thomas Carlyle, here as they stand, have in them conjunctly the wisdom of many swallows! Let them exercise it then, in God's name, and live happy as these birds of passage are doing! — It is not Nature that made men unhappy; but their own despicable perversities. The Deuce is in the people! Have they not food and raiment fit for all the wants of the body; and wives and children and brothers and parents and holiest duties for the wants of the soul? What ails them then, the ninnies? Their *vanity*, their despicable, very despicable *self-conceit*, conjoined with, or rather grounded on, their *blindness* and *lowness* of mind. They want to be happy, and by *happiness* they mean *pleasure*, a series of *passive* enjoyments: if they had a quarter of an eye they would see that there not only was not but could not be such a thing in God's creation.—I often seriously thank this (otherwise very infernal) distemper for having

helped to teach me these things. They are not to be learned without sore afflictions : happy he to whom even affliction will teach them ! And herewith ends my present lecture. Beloved pupil ! art thou not afraid of the wonderful lectures thou art fated to encounter from a Husband so didactic ? Or is it rather by (curtain) lectures that thou purporest to instruct *him* ?

It is singular what a mockbird I am : I am writing here unconsciously in the very note of Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, on whose works I have been labouring for the last four weeks. I sent a most mad *article* on the man to *press* with Alick this morning by Dumfries. It is pity that it was not wiser ; for he is a great genius : but how can a man write about geniuses when he has a bride waiting to be written to ? The best of it is, I shall be done with Richter in four days from this date ; and with the *Preface* in two days longer, and then the Book is off *my* hands ! Jack tells me you are to remove about the 25th of this month : write to me from under the shadow of this *tree*, and tell me when I am to come and get fifty kisses from you. Oh what wonderful *burblements* and embroilments we have to come through ! I wish to Heaven we were married three calendar months, and I sitting writing another Book in the little parlour, and you coming in to get ware for the dinner (from certain presses there) and I catching you round the waist and stealing two kisses by way of Promethean fire from the fairest lips in the world, and pressing the truest heart in the world for one moment against mine. I believe in sincere truth, if the Devil be not in me, I shall like you very heartily ; and learn to put faith in you as my best helper, and be your helper and husband in heart

soul and spirit. O my Dearest! Our love has hitherto been a sound, a voice; it is now to become an action, and we shall have much to encounter and enjoy together. Let us not be foolish but wise, and all will be well!

“Enweri tells us (a most royal man,
The deepest heart and highest head to scan) :
At every place, at every time, thy surest chance
Lies in Decision, Justice, Tolerance.”¹

Tolerance is the hardest for those that have it not by Nature; and we must learn to tolerate, for it is never out of place; to “bear one another’s burdens,” to be true, patient, meek, humble, one in heart as we are to be in fate and interest.

My paper is wearing done; and what is the matter? Have I aught more to say but, in a thousand figures and diverse phraseologies, that I love you as my Wife, and will soon see you to take counsel about this and all that concerns us?

Write to me whenever you are settled, and tell me when I am to come. I purpose sleeping in this Comley Bank House; for by God’s blessing a “lodging” is a place I will never exist in more while in *this* world — if I can help it. The first night, I am roused by some infernal tumult from my sleep; I feel as if broken on the wheel with one annoyance and another; and in three weeks, I am fit for Lob’s Pound² no better place. These things I tell *you*

¹ From the prologue to “Wilhelm Meister’s Travels.” — See Carlyle’s translation.

² Lob was a Puritan preacher suspected of disloyalty. According to common report he had the floor of his pulpit so contrived that he could, on the sudden appearance of the King’s officers, descend into subterranean regions and make good his escape from arrest. On one

because it is good that you know them: to other people I had as soon not tell them, because it is good that they do not know them. The tender mercies of the world are considerable in a case of that kind: I have known a little of them; and splenetic contempt is not the best fruit, I hope, they have produced in me. I have hundreds of compliments for you here; in various dialects of speech, all coming from the region of the heart. The Joiners are in two days to begin repairing this house, and then they (not the Joiners) hope to see—*us*. Remember me in all affection to your Mother, whom I hope soon to speak with at large. Make my compliments also to James Johnstone: if you can do an encouraging or kind thing to him, you do it to a good man, and to *my* old schoolfellow and constant wellwisher. Write when you arrive. I am your own forever,

T. CARLYLE.

My Mother has come up expressly (with the candle for sealing which gave her notice) to say that she has received with many feelings of gratitude your celebrated *marmalade pot*, which she reserves the trial of for some great occasion. She has still a hankering for a Letter: and sends you her warmest love, whether you write or not.

occasion, however, on thus descending he was pursued by the officers, who, being ignorant of the intricacies of Lob's retreat, not only failed to find him but lost their way out and were themselves hopelessly impounded. Hence the place was ever afterwards called "Lob's Pound."—See "*Hudibras*," Pt. i. canto iii. ll. 909-11.

LETTER 168

*T. Carlyle to Miss Welsh, 21, Comley Bank
Edinburgh*

SCOTSBRIG, Saturday, '12 Aug., 1826.'

MY DARLING,—I am very sorry for you this morning, and those last days generally: I know you were expecting with certainty a Letter from my hand; and till Monday you cannot get any. Properly speaking, I should be sorry for myself, that I must appear to you so careless, and lose the enjoyment of talking with you in all sorts of foolish small talk: but the truth of the matter is this: A packet of sheets came down on Monday morning, with a long Letter from the Bibliopole requiring an alteration in the Title-page and Preface; then Jonathan on Wednesday morning; the management of all which things has occupied my whole disposable time till this morning. Thank Heaven! Title-page, and Preface and all are now off my hands: next week I get the last four sheets, and then in two days bid goodbye to the whole matter. At anyrate, what is the matter whether I write to you or not? Are you not always in my heart and my thoughts, and am not I always in yours, my little Dearest; and are we not soon to be joined in the holiest and closest bonds forevermore? O my good Jane, it is an awful and delicious thought this of wedlock! Need is, most pressing need, that the heart you give your own heart to, be well and seriously judged and found worthy. With one whose

integrity of soul you even doubted, it were better to die a thousand deaths than to wed. My own true Wife! I trust in God I shall love thee well; that thou shalt find a home for thy fair soul in my bosom; that my arms may encompass thee about from the afflictions of existence, and the heart thou hast believed in so nobly may prove no refuge of lies! I swear it will break my heart if I make thee unhappy. And yet I am a perverse mortal to deal with, and the best resolutions make shipwreck in the sea of practice: but thou must be a *very* good Wife, and I will be a very good Husband; and our souls shall have no secret from each other, and we live indivisible and *one*, poor or rich as it shall please Heaven, but more blessed in each other's love and goodness than any other Pair. O I feel as if I could live and die with thee if thou wert *mine*, mine as thou shalt yet be, not by priestly benedictions but by the soft pervading influences of thy own worth and wisdom, reaching deeper and deeper into my soul year after year as we live together. What more can I say? Kiss thee with a true kiss, which means: Look in thy own heart, there thou wilt read it all.¹

Jonathan saw you the night before he came away; sitting, as he represents it, in the midst of chaos, like Patience on a monument, smiling at grief.² Here too are Plasterers and Carpenters bringing back the reign of Ancient Night; the tumult, the dust and horrors too high for the English language! This is the Purgatory fire; but is there not a Heaven beyond it? Bear all these

¹ Cf. "Magst in Deinem Innern lesen
Wie Du Dir es offenbarst." — See *post*, Letter 171.

² "Twelfth Night," Act ii. sc. 4.

things with calmness, for they *will* have an end ; and we shall get married in spite of all men and things, and be very good *Eheleute* too. The good Jonathan likes you as well as it is possible without loving you : he really seems very much improved since he went away last ; and I think bids fair to do well. So far as he has come, I make bold to say that *no* young man of his time in the Edinburgh School has studied more faithfully, or amassed more sound knowledge and worthy habitudes with similar opportunities. His *Thesis* is very considerably the best I ever saw produced there, on such principles. . . .

To your arrangement of my journeyings and our meeting, I cheerfully subscribe ;¹ judging it the best among several bad ones. Edinburgh, however, I believe I *must* visit before a certain event ; but I will let you be gone from it, and most probably have seen you first. The business is, I must fall upon some new enterprise if possible before the *great day* : I would not have that season poisoned by base bargainings and chafferings with tradesmen ; I should like rather to have a task begun, which beside my little *Weibchen* I might then fall to prosecuting with double alacrity. Nay more, these Novels are not to be *published* till November ; and I must go and raise the cash for them forthwith² —

¹ There *may* possibly be a Letter from Miss Welsh missing here, but more likely her arrangement of journeyings and meetings was communicated to Carlyle *viva voce* by Dr. Carlyle who had returned from Edinburgh a few days before the date of this Letter.

² Carlyle had embarked nearly all his savings in helping forward the farming operations of his father and brothers, and in the education of Dr. Carlyle. By the end of January, 1824, he had saved “between three hundred and four hundred pounds” ; since

for obvious reasons. The Bookseller tells me "times are exceedingly bad"; but he does not frighten me with that talk: thro' the strength of Heaven, I shall earn food and raiment for us both, in all manner of times; and have something left for higher purposes too. The gift, small as it is, which God has given me shall not lie unimproved, let the contradictions of sinners be what they may. I am happy to say that I feel more and more consciousness of the *rights of man* within me; and less and less dependence on any patronage either from men or things. It all depends on our own humour, and manner of conceiving it. I hope yet to be, not a great man, for that is unessential, but a good man, for *your* sake, if it were for nothing else. Cant and palabra will not do: I cannot tell you with what sympathy I have come to regard some of our Edinburgh critics, just of late, in regard to the matter of this very Book. I will learn much, and teach you much, much, when we are wedded.

Do you ever write to Mrs. Montagu? Make my most kind compliments (she really *has* many excellencies and much nobleness of mind), and also the best apology you can devise for me. I feel as if I could not write to her, till *after*. I have done her injustice many times: she is not without (unconscious) affectations and the like: but am I, is any one? And how many women have I seen, who had one tithe of the *true* greatness of mind which she has? Alas! scarcely one or two in this

that date he had been paid ninety pounds for his "Schiller," one hundred and eighty pounds for the translation of "Meister's Apprenticeship," and some one hundred pounds of salary from the Bulls, — say seven hundred pounds in all.

wide world. Tell her that we will both love her — as well as we can.

Can you find *Wetterbaum* (Weather-tree) in your German Dictionary? ¹ If so send it down (the English of it) without delay. But I much doubt you cannot: Jack had left Edinburgh too soon; the Letter I sent to him must come back with no *Wetterbaum* in it: but any way I can do.

From this place, I have nothing but all manner of kind compliments and wishes to send you; from my Mother, from Jack and Jane in words; from all the rest, I know it well, in thought. When the house is done they expect to see *us* here. Did you *cry* when you turned your back on Haddington? I believe you did now; ill as you liked the place. Comley Bank will be far better; especially with so illustrious a gentleman, philosopher and husband beside you.

Your own forever,
T. CARLYLE.

I am idle at present, or at least occupied as I like. I will come to Nithsdale when you see good. I confess I could like to have arranged the matter with less restraint to both parties: but after all, what difference how it is arranged, so it is arranged at all! And arranged it shall be, if Heaven spare us. Tell me seriously: are you happy? Give me twenty kisses, and love me forever in your good heart, as I love you. *A Dieu!*

¹ *Wetterbaum* is “a thick cloud that spreads upwards like the branches of a tree.” Carlyle’s German Dictionary at this time was Nathan Bailey’s (Leipzig and Jena, 1810), given to him by Edward Irving. It does not contain the word *Wetterbaum*.

LETTER 169

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

TEMPLAND, Thursday, '31 August, 1826.'

WELL, dearest Love, here am I, — escaped alive from horrors as of the Bottomless Pit. But just alive and nothing more; for my spirit is gone, my intellect gone, my good-humour gone; and in short, I would hang myself if certain considerations did not prevent me.

I wonder that among all the evils deprecated in the Liturgy no one thought of inserting *flitting*. Is there any worse thing? Oh no, no! From flitting, then, Good Lord deliver us! — and from some other evils best unfolded in all their length and breadth when we meet. And when will that be? Mercy! to think we have not seen each other for a whole year;¹ and once no more than sixteen British miles betwixt us! Oh glorious instance of patience and long-suffering! And the annals of our courtship afford many such. But in the other and better world we are about to enter, these Job-inflictions will be all forgotten, or remembered merely as a troubled dream.

Write instantly what day I may look for you. Perhaps it were best you should take Templand on your road to Edinburgh. But as you like.

The house at Comley Bank is at length completed, and looks pretty and convenient enough; certainly nothing like so commodious and elegant as the one I have left; but *all* things considered,

¹ They met last at Templand, September, 1825.

likely to answer much better. So here are two steps in the business happily taken. The last is the worst of all; — would to God it were over also!

Your Letter came in company with one from Mrs. Montagu. She is ill. Mr. Montagu has been very ill, and Mrs. Procter all but dead. And still she writes to me — *me* who am nothing to her but a name; and sends the kindest message to you.¹ She is *very* good, and I rejoice we are *both* to love her; for otherwise I must have loved her alone.

She says something in a desponding manner about Edward Irving. His little girl is in a bad way, and he himself far from well. Poor Edward! the summer day of his exultation has been quickly overcast! But do you know, I cannot feel for him at present? I cannot feel for any mortal but myself.

Give my kindest regards to dear John, whom I like as well as he can possibly like me. Remember me also in an affectionate manner to all the rest. And to James Johnstone, if he happens to be near you. You will write on Sunday?

I am almost ashamed to send you such a scrawl; but I am got into a way of doing everything in a hurry, — since the flitting.

God forever bless you,

Your own JANE WELSH.

¹ “If Mr. Carlyle is near you, tell him that a lady, and a handsome one too, declared to Mr. Montagu and myself her ‘firm belief that the author of the “Life of Schiller” might have chosen a wife, without the smallest chance of refusal, from any unengaged lady in England.’ Is not this true fame?” — Mrs. Montagu to J. B. Welsh, 7th Aug., 1826.

LETTER 170

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

SCOTSBRIG, Monday Evening, '4 September, 1826.'

MY LOVE, — I had sent daily to the Post-office for news of you, during the last fortnight; and on Saturday, as usual, I was answered with a negative. The blind postmaster's boy had failed to decipher your address; and so kept me another eight-and-forty hours in suspense. I did not get your Letter till this morning.

Would to Heaven, as you say, the whole matter were over, and no more Letters in this world to pass to and fro between us! — Well, over it will be ere long one way or another, and so let us be patient and content. My good little girl has suffered much for me already; but I trust in God it shall all be made good to her in future.

I might set out immediately, but I am rather sicker than usual for the last three or four days; and besides I do not wish to take you by surprise. Till Wednesday evening you cannot get this Letter; so I must be content to announce myself for Thursday first; about evening I suppose, for the way is long, and Larry cannot gallop it all. On Thursday evening then, will you — give me a kiss, a *Brautkuss* [nuptial kiss]? I should not say; but I know in heart you will.

I may stay with you all Friday, and take counsel about everything, and return on Saturday, to expedite what has been consulted.

I could wish considerably that *one* journey to Edin-

burgh *might* do for all; yet I fear it; for money is an indispensable, and without my presence I doubt it will be unattainable. This also we shall talk of.

Quid multa [Why many words]? I will see you in twelve hours after you read this, and tell you a thousand things, and hear as many, and discuss the whole mystery of our Fortune, now one and indivisible, and steal many a kind look, and some hundreds of kisses from you, and hopes that might make a less steadfast philosophy waver on its basis. Good night Darling! And may the Giver of all good be with you!

Forget not my kindest regards to your Mother, to your Aunt and your Grandfather whom I hope soon to greet in person. All here from the oldest to the youngest wish you heartily well.

I am ever your own,

T. CARLYLE.

James Johnstone I shall see this night; being invited to drink tea along with Jack at his — wedding! By Heaven, the man is to be wedded! Tomorrow morning about four of the clock he is joined in indissoluble tie with Miss Janet Carlyle of Grahams-hall, and rolls off to Haddington that same night. There is for you! And to crown the whole he celebrates his nuptial feast the night *before* the nuptials! If the Bride should rue in the interim! But I swear she will not. — Good night! I am far too late for the marriage tea.

LETTER 171

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

SCOTSBRIG, 19th September, 1826.

BESTES LIEBCHEN, — I have been a very wicked man of late weeks, and not less so since I saw you ; so splenetic, so sick, so sleepless, so void of hope, faith, charity ; in short so altogether bad and worthless.¹ I trust in Heaven I shall be better soon ; a certain incident otherwise will wear a quite original aspect. I declare you might put me to shame when I think of your manner of being ; in years and understanding you are younger ; but in the wisdom of the heart, in much that best deserves the name of Reason, I should do well to become your scholar.

I have not been neglectful of our common interest since we parted, however I may have seemed ; my evil as well as my good dispositions both incite me to wish this matter were over. The evening after my return hither I wrote to Edinburgh in quest or rather in demand of *funds* (for without filthy lucre nothing can be done) ; and on Friday, I received for answer not a draft for £200, but intelligence that my Bibliopolist was gone to London, and not to return for a month. Here then was one department of research exhausted. A remnant of vanity (which it would appear I have not entirely conquered still),

¹ Carlyle was now suffering a relapse after his arduous and long-continued labours on the "German Romance." He here mistakes, as he often did elsewhere, the remonstrances of an ailing liver for the chidings of a guilty conscience. Like Teufelsdröckh, he was not guilty, but only suffering the pangs of guilt.

or perhaps it might be of something better, rendered me unwilling to *borrow* money from a stranger for such a purpose: so I took Alick to counsel on the matter; and after considering it a moment, I accepted his offer to withdraw from his husbandry so much capital for a month or two as will suffice us; a measure which I adopt with the less reluctance, as I can fairly calculate on being able to repay him before it will be specially wanted. About this day week, then, I shall be master of £50.

Tomorrow I go to Dumfries to set certain fractions of men a-cutting clothes for me; carriers must be spoken with, friends bid farewell to, and *then!* I think we should be *proclaimed* (Lord help us!) on the *second* Sunday from this date; and wedded about the following Thursday (it answers best for carriers, unless you considerably prefer the beginning of the week); that is on Thursday fortnight, a fortnight and a day from the time when you read this scrawl. Have you the heart, good Love? *Glaubst Du noch jetzt* [Art thou still believing]? I have not found such faith, neither here nor elsewhere.

All these dates and arrangements are still liable to alteration, of course; and but propounded here for your sanction, in case they meet your taste, or for change if they do not. Write hither without stop, to tell me. If all goes well, my next Letter to you will enclose a Note to Mr. Anderson¹ the Minister to get us proclaimed and to come and wed us on Thursday morning. John and I will come up to Glendinning's Inn the night before; he may ride with us the first stage if you like; then come back with the chaise, and return home on the back of

¹ Minister of the parish of Closeburn, in which Templand is situated.

Larry, richer by one *Sister* (in relations) than he ever was. Poor Jack!

One other most humble care is whether we can calculate on getting Post-horses and chaises all the way to Edinburgh without danger of let, or [if] it would not be better to take seats in the coach for some part of it? In this matter I suppose you can give me no light: perhaps your Mother might. At all events tell me your *taste* in the business; for the coach *is* sure if the other is not.¹ Will you ask your Mother if she knows whether we should be proclaimed in this Parish also? I believe it depends on the practice of the marrying clergyman: I would give two-pence that the Closeburn Parson were not rigid in this matter. Here, the whole matter is next to an utter secret, or at least a most dim surmise. Write me all that you can; and do take some hand in the projection of the affair; I can have no taste in it whatever except to comply with yours.

Before ending I should say something consolatory and encouraging to my much-loved Bride, whose heart is doubtless as loaded with cares as my own, and far less fit to bear them. But what can I say in this Tartarean mood? Simply that there will be neither peace nor rest till we are *one*, till I have my

¹ “Carlyle, thrifty always, considered it might be expedient ‘to take seats in the coach from Dumfries’ [*sic*]. The coach would be safer than a carriage, more certain of arriving, &c.” Froude, “Life of Carlyle,” i. 358.—In his anxiety to show that Carlyle was guilty of penuriousness in suggesting the coach, Mr. Froude succeeds only in again displaying his own ignorance of Scottish geography or topography: Templand (Thornhill) is quite fourteen miles nearer Edinburgh than Dumfries is! The coach from Dumfries to Edinburgh travelled *via* Moffat, not *via* Thornhill at all. Froude’s story is a tissue of misrepresentations.

own true Jane far away from a thousand grating circumstances that have long oppressed her heart and embittered mine the instant I came within their sphere. O, for God's sake be good my Darling! Good and wise; and thou wilt have the happiest husband, and be the happiest wife in the world. I do not mean compliant and affectionate: that you are already; but *wise*, clear-sighted towards *me*, and towards the new sphere of life (new in rank and object and all its properties), my true Guardian Spirit, my soul's friend, my own forever and ever! . . . I swear we shall be happy: for I love thee; and with all my faults can never cease to love thee in heart, and in heart to long for thy good. Believe this, for it is true; and let it be an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, as thy love is of me:

“Was Du mir als ” Weib geworden,
 “Was Du mir als Mädchen warst,
 Magst in Deinem Innern lesen,
 Wie Du Dir es offenbarst.”¹

¹ From Goethe's Poem “Ottilien von Goethe” (Collected Works, vol. iv. p. 104, Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1827). — In the first line of the stanza “Weib geworden” is substituted by Carlyle for “Kind gewesen” of the original. — I have to thank Mr. L. L. Mackall, of Jena, for the reference to Goethe's Works, and also for the information that the stanza formed part of the Prologue to “Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre” in its first form, — that from which Carlyle made his Translation. — The following is a literal rendering, line for line, of the stanza as *adapted*:

What you have become to me as a woman,
 What you were to me as a maiden,
 You may read clear in your own breast,
 As you made it manifest to yourself.

The following doggerel gives the meaning better or worse:

What to me you are as woman,
 What to me as maid you were,
 You may read in your own bosom,
 As you have revealed it there.

Alas poor sentiment: I must stick to business henceforth. — Kiss me and say yes to all this, and kiss me again and send me away. — I am ever and all thy own,

T. CARLYLE.

You will write on Thursday? I shall have your answer on Saturday. — Compliments *ut solet et decet* [as is customary and becoming]. — I am in haste and headache. Are you recovered? Were you at Dabton? Are you frightened, sad, joyful, hopeful or repentant; angry at me or fond of me? God bless you! *Vale et me ama!*

LETTER 172

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

‘TEMLAND,’ Saturday, ‘23 September, 1826.’

MY DEAREST, — You desired me to answer your Letter on Thursday; but I have waited another Post that I might do it better, if indeed any good thing is to be said under such horrid circumstances. Oh my own Darling! do for Heaven’s sake get into a more benignant humour, or *the* incident will not only “bear a very original aspect,” but likewise a very heart-breaking one. I see not how I am to go thro’ with it. I turn quite sick at the thought. But it were Job’s comfort to vex you with my anxieties and “severe affection.” I would rather set before you by way of encouragement, that the Purgatory will soon be past; and “speak peace where there is no peace”; only that you would easily see through such affected philosophy. There

is nothing for it then, but, like the Annan Congregation, to pray to the Lord!

I have said I delayed writing that I might do it more satisfactorily. For this reason: I expected to know last night when my Mother is to come from Edinburgh! in which case I should have been able to name *some* day, tho' not so early a one as that proposed. But, alas, alas! my Mother is dilatory and uncertain this time, as ever; and the only satisfaction I can give you at this writing, is to promise I will soon write again.

What has taken her to Edinburgh so inopportunistically! To set some fractions of women a-cutting white gowns,—a thing which might have been done with all convenience while we were there last month. But some people are wise, and some are otherwise; and I shall be mighty glad to get the gowns in *any* way; for I should like ill to put you to charge in *that* article for a very great while. Besides you know it would be a bad omen to marry in mourning. When I put it on six years ago, I thought to wear it for ever. But I have found a second Father, and it were ungrateful not to show even externally how much I rejoice in him.

I fear you *must* be proclaimed in your own Parish (pity! since you are so ashamed of me!); but I will enlighten you on that head also in my next. — With respect to the journey part of the business, I loudly declare for running the risk of being stuck up by the way (which at this season of the year is next to none) rather than undergoing the unheard of horror of being thrown into the company of strangers, in such severe circumstances, or possibly (which would be still worse) of some acquaintance, in the stage-coach. Indeed, indeed, Dearest, I prom-

ise you to make no demonstrations that I can possibly help; but I am sure from the faintness and cold shudder that comes over me at the thought of that odious ceremony, that I shall be in no state for at least a week after, to endure any eye but yours. For this same reason, I also prohibit John from going with us an inch of the road; and he must not think there is any unkindness in it. — My Aunt thinks you and he would be greatly better here the night before than at Glendinning's. But that as you like. If you come, I shall take care that you get a room that is not over the kitchen; and for the rest, I need not see you unless I feel "disposed." But it will be time enough to settle *how* when we have settled *when*. In the meantime you had better write me a few lines, if it is not too much trouble. But whether you write or not, *I* will, so soon as I hear again from my Mother. Did you ever see such paper? It comes from Thornhill; and I can find no knife to mend my pen.

I hope your Mother is praying for me very hard. Give her my affectionate regards — a kiss to Jane. Ever your own,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 173

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

SCOTSBRIG, Wednesday, '27 Sept., 1826.'

MY DEAREST, — Surely I am bound by all laws human and divine to "write you a few lines," however enormous the "trouble" may be; and this the rather as except thinking about you and this general

Finale that lies before us, I have next to nothing to do. You will never in the world guess what sort of a pastime I have had recourse to in this wind-bound portion of my voyage. Nothing less than the reading of Kant's transcendental Philosophy! So it is: I am at the 150th page of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*; not only reading but partially understanding, and full of projects for instructing my benighted countrymen on the true merits of this sublime system, at some more propitious season. To speak truth, however, one of Scott's Novels would suit me much better: last night I found Kant was getting rather abstruse; and in one or two points he puzzled me so, that today I have not once opened him. On the whole, this present "middle state" might, so far as the Almanack and the Clock are concerned, seem peculiarly favourable for literary projection: but alas the heart is not there; I am fallen, fallen from the pure regions of Art into the boggy Syrtis of Session Clerks and Tailors and Post-keepers; and I feel too clearly that till the great Day is over, I can neither think of one thing nor another to any purpose. The Philosophy of living well is the end of all Philosophies, Transcendental and common; and if affection be the soul of life, shall we not teach one another to live?

After all I believe we take this impending ceremony far too much to heart. Bless me, have not many people been married before now? And were they not all carried thro' with some measure of Christian comfort, and taught to see that marriage was simply nothing but — marriage? Take courage, then, my Darling; and let no "cold shudder" come over you, and call not this an "odious ceremony," but rather a blessed ordinance, sanctioning

by earthly laws what is already sanctioned in heaven, uniting two souls for worldly joy and woe, which in God's sight have chosen one another from amongst all men! Can any road be dark which is leading thither? You will see it will all be "smooth as oil," notwithstanding our forebodings. Consider Goethe's saying: "We look upon our scholars as so many swimmers, each of whom, in the element that threatens to devour him, unexpectedly feels himself borne up and able to make progress; and so it is with *all* that man undertakes."¹ With *all*, marriage as well as other things. By all reasons therefore, German and English, I call upon you to be composed in spirit; and to fear no evil in this really blessed matter. — Now tell me at this moment, when your apprehensions are the darkest, how much would you take to *rue*? Five guineas? Fifty thousand? I do not think you would take — five.

To your arrangements about the journey and the other items of the *How* and *When* I can only answer as it becomes me: Be it as thou hast said. Let me know your will, and it shall be my pleasure; and so by the blessing of Heaven we shall roll along side by side with the speed of Post-horses, till we arrive at Comley Bank; and then, as Richter says, the door we open is no longer *mine* or *thine*, but *ours*; and we two are one and indivisible for ever and ever! I shall only stipulate further that you let me by the road, as occasion serves, *smoke three cigars*, without criticism or reluctance, as things essential to my perfect contentment! Yet if you object to this article, think not that I will break off the match on that account; but rather like a dutiful Husband, submit to the everlasting

¹ "Meister's Travels," ch. xiv.

ordinances of Providence, and let my Wife have her way.

You are very kind, and more just than I had reason to expect, in imputing my ill-natured speeches (for which Heaven forgive me!) to their true cause, a disordered nervous system. Believe me, Jane, it is not I but the Devil speaking out of me which could utter one harsh word to a heart that so little deserves it. O, I were blind and wretched, if I could make thee unhappy! But it will not and shall not be; for I am not naturally a villain, and at bottom, I do love you well; and so when we have learned to know each other as we are, and got all our arrangements accomplished, and our household set in order, I dare promise you that it will all be well, and we shall live far happier than we have ever hoped. Sickness is the origin, but no good cause of indiscriminating spleen: if we are sick, we must learn if not to resist at least to evade its influences; a science, in which even I (in the midst of my own establishment) fancy I have made some progress, and despair not of making more.

As to the Proclamation, on which I expect your advice, deeply as I feel ashamed of you, I protest I had rather be proclaimed in all the Parish Churches of the Empire than miss the little Bride I have in my eye; a wicked gypsy truly, but one whom I see not how I am to do without. So, get the gowns made ready, and loiter not, and tell me, and in a twinkling *me voilà!*—Thank your Aunt for her kind invitation, which I do not refuse, or accept till next Letter; waiting to see how matters turn. I was surely born to be a Bedouin: without freedom I should soon “dee and do nocht ava’.”¹

¹ See “Letters and Memorials,” i. 315.

My chosen abode is in my own house, in preference to the Palace of Windsor; and next to this, shall I not (with the man in the Play) take my ease in mine Inn? ¹ — I wish my kind compliments to Grandfather, if he will accept them; in his monosyllabic manner of existence, I discern the features of a genuine heart, and feel that I could like him much.

My Mother's prayers (to speak with all seriousness) are, I do believe, not wanting either to you or to me; and if the sincere wishes of a true soul can have any virtue, we shall not want a blessing. She bids me send you the kindest message I can contrive; which I send by itself without contrivance. She says she will have one good *greet* when we set off, and then be at peace. — Now then, Dearest, what remains but that you appoint *the date*; that you look forward to it with trust in me and trust in yourself, and come with trust to your husband's arms and heart, there to abide thro' all chances forever? O we are two ungrateful wretches, or we should be happy! Write soon, and love me for ever. And so goodnight *mein Herzenskind!* Thine *auf ewig*,

T. CARLYLE.

We may spare a page or two here for the insertion of the following Letter, which, although forming no part of this Correspondence, yet throws a pleasant light on it, and is moreover interesting as showing very clearly Miss Welsh's high opinion of "the man she had chosen before all others" for her Husband. Her love and appreciation of him, and her pride in him, as well as her contempt for his gainsayers, are apparent in every sentence.

¹ "King Henry IV." Pt. i. Act iii. sc. 3.

It is one of the Letters which Carlyle himself selected and annotated for insertion in *The Letters and Memorials of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, and which Mr. Froude omitted.

LETTER 174

*Miss J. Welsh to Mrs. George Welsh, Boreland,
Southwick, Dumfries.*

TEMPLAND, 1st October, 1826.

MY DEAR MRS. WELSH, — You must think me just about the most faithless character in the Nation; but I know, myself, that I am far from being so bad as I seem. The truth is, the many strange things I have had to do, and think of, in late months, left me no leisure of mind for writing mere complimentary letters: but still, you, as well as others of my friends, have not been remembered by me with the less kindness, that you have seen no *expression* of my remembrance on paper. So, pray do not go to entertain any hard thoughts of me, my good little Aunt; seeing that, at bottom, I deserve nothing but loving-kindness at your hands. Rather add a spice of long-suffering to your loving-kindness; which will make us the very best friends in the world.

It were no news to tell you what a momentous matter I have been busied with; “not to know *that* would argue yourself unknown.”¹ For a marriage is a topic suited to the capacities of all living; and, in this, as in every known instance, has been made the most of. But, for as much breath as has been wasted on “my *Situation*,” I have my own

¹ “Not to know me argues yourselves unknown.” — “Paradise Lost,” iv. 830.

doubts whether they have given you any *right* idea of it. They would tell you, I should suppose, first and foremost, that my Intended is *poor* (for *that* it requires no great depth of sagacity to discover), and, in the next place, most likely, indulge in some criticisms scarce flattering, on his birth¹ (the more likely, if their own birth happened to be mean or doubtful); and, if they happened to be vulgar-fine people with disputed pretensions to good looks, they would, to a certainty, set him down as unpolished and ill-looking. But a hundred chances to one, they would not tell you he is among the cleverest men of his day; and not the cleverest only but the most enlightened! that he possesses all the qualities I deem essential in *my* Husband, a warm true heart to love me, a towering intellect to command me, and a spirit of fire to be the guiding star of my life.² Excellence of this sort always requires some degree of superiority in those who duly appreciate it: in the eyes of the *canaille* — poor soulless wretches! — it is mere foolishness, and it is only the *canaille* who babble about other people's affairs.

Such then is this future Husband of mine; not a *great* man according to the most common sense of the word, but truly great in its natural, proper

¹ “Mr. Gracie, of Dumfries, a kind of ‘Genealogist by trade,’ had marked long since (of his own accord, not knowing me) my Grandfather to be lineally descended from the ‘First Lord Carlyle,’ and brings us down from the brother of the murdered Duncan. What laughing my Darling and I had when that document [Gracie’s Genealogical Tree of the Carlyle Family] arrived.” — T. C.

² This was very literally fulfilled to her, for after twenty years of married life she wrote to her husband: “I have grown to love you, the longer the more, till now you are grown to be the whole Universe, God, everything to me.” — MS. Letter, *penes me*.

sense; a scholar, a poet, a philosopher, a wise and noble man, one who holds his patent of nobility from Almighty God, and whose high stature of manhood is not to be measured by the inch-rule of Lilliputs!—Will you like him? No matter whether you do or not—since I like him in the deepest part of my soul. I would invite you to my wedding, if I meant to invite any one; but, to *my* taste, such ceremonies cannot be *too* private: besides by making distinctions among my relatives on the occasion, I should be sure to give offence; and, by God's blessing, I will have no one there who does not feel kindly both towards *him* and *me*.

I wished and purposed to have paid you a visit at Boreland. But when it was convenient for me to go, Robert and his Wife were stumbling-blocks in my path;—and now the thing is impossible, the days that remain to me are so few, and so fully employed. My affectionate regards to my Uncle. A kiss to wee John. And believe me always your sincere friend and dutiful Niece,

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 175¹

Miss Welsh to T. Carlyle, Scotsbrig

TEMPLAND, Tuesday, '3 Oct. 1826.'

UNKIND that you are ever to suffer me to be cast down, when it is so easy a thing for you to lift me

¹ Mr. Froude says ("Life," i. 363), "Miss Welsh's final Letter, informing Carlyle of the details to be observed, is humorously headed, '*The last Speech and marrying Words of that unfortunate young woman, Jane Baillie Welsh.*'" This is not the case:

to the Seventh Heaven ! My soul was darker than midnight, when your pen said " let there be light," and there *was* light as at the bidding of the Word. And now I am resolved in spirit and even joyful, — joyful even in the face of the dreaded ceremony, of *starvation*, and every possible fate. Oh, my dearest Friend ! be always *so* good to me, and I shall make the best and happiest Wife. When I read in your looks and words that you love me, I feel it in the deepest part of my soul ; then I care not one straw for the whole Universe beside ; but when you fly from my caresses to — smoke tobacco, or speak of me as a new *circumstance* of your lot, then indeed my " heart is troubled about many things."

My Mother is not come yet, but is expected this week ; the week following must be given to her to take a last look at her Child ; and then, Dearest, God willing, I am your own for ever and ever.

This day fortnight would suit *me* better than Thursday ; for, you know, after the proclaiming one is not fit to be seen, and therefore the sooner we get away the better. But then it would not suit — the Carriers ? unless, perhaps you could send your things the week before, or leave them to follow after you. However, the difference of two days is of no such moment in my mind that you may not fix whichever *you* find most convenient. So determine and let me know.

With respect to the proclamation, I am grieved to say I can give you no comfort ; for not only neither this final Letter nor any other of Miss Welsh's Letters to Carlyle is so " headed." The Letter is printed here exactly as it is written, — without suppression of a single word.

must you be proclaimed like any common man, in your own Parish, but send a line from the Minister certifying you *unmarried*, before they will proclaim us here. Mr. Anderson, for his own part, would require nothing of the sort; but his Elders, he says, are mighty sticklish about forms. They would not register the marriage unless it were gone about in the regular way. — It is a pity! But, after all, the *crying*¹ is the least of it.

Will you and John come here the night before, or not? Whichever way you like. If you come, I have a notion I will not see you; but I cannot say positively at this distance. Oh mercy! What I would give to be sitting in our doll's-house, married for a week!

Have you spoken to Jane yet about coming to us? and will she trust herself to my sisterly care? I would not have her for a month or two, — till I have got over the first awkwardness of such a change, and my wits are recovered from the bewilderment of the new world about me, sufficiently to look to her welfare. Surely we should feel happier for having the good little creature with us; and the arrangement, I trust, would not be without benefit to herself. For my own share in it, I engage to be a true kind Sister to her, and an instructor as far as I can. Tell her this, if you see good; and give her a kiss in my name. I may well return *one* out of *twenty*. But indeed, Dear, these kisses on paper are scarce worth keeping. You gave me one on my neck that night you were in such good-humour, and one on my lips on some forgotten occasion, that I would not part with for a hundred thousand paper ones. Perhaps some day or other, I shall get none

¹ The Scottish phrase for proclaiming the banns of marriage.

of either sort :¹ *sic transit gloria mundi* [so passes the glory of the world] !²

Have you heard of Mrs. Strachey yet ? I have ! with a vengeance ! Mrs. Montagu in her last Letter coolly denounces her as an "*Arch-fiend* !" And you, Thomas Carlyle, uphold her an Angel of light ! I wonder which I am to believe ? Something whispers, Mrs. Montagu. Is it jealousy think you ? Oh no, for I do firmly believe that had Julia Strachey been Jane Welsh, and I Julia Strachey, you would still have had the grace to love *me* best. Yes, and I should have loved you too, and then ! Mercy ! what a *burble* would have come of it ? Things are better ordered considerably as they are, I'm thinking.

There came a Letter from my pretty Cousin, Phœbe Baillie, the other night, almost sentimental, for a wonder. The Girl has taken it into her head, and not without reason, that my grave Help-mate will hardly be able to endure her ; so she conjures us, in all seriousness, not to discard her utterly, and thereby blast her hopes of ever becoming more wise ! You will surely let me teach her German, Dear ? I promised, and you would not have me break my word. Besides the poor little soul has

¹ Miss Welsh was here "afraid of the day she was never to see." In his "Reminiscences" Carlyle writes, mournfully describing the final parting from his wife (on his setting off for Edinburgh to deliver his Inaugural Address) : "The last I saw of her was as she stood with her back to the Parlour-door to bid me her good-bye. She kissed me twice (she me once, I her a second time) ; and — oh blind mortals, my one wish and hope was to get back to her again, and be in peace under her bright welcome, — for the rest of my days, as it were !" i. 246.

² A sentence used in the Pope's enthronement, and in old Roman triumphal processions.

none to speak one true word to her but only me; and her follies, I would fain persuade myself, are more of education than of nature. But you shall see her in good time, and judge for yourself; and then, not my will be done, but thine. I am going to be really a very meek-tempered Wife. Indeed, I am begun to be meek-tempered already. My Aunt tells me she could live forever with *me* without quarrelling, — I am so reasonable and equal in my humour. There is something to gladden your heart withal! And more than this; my Grandfather observed while I was supping my porridge last night, that “She was really a douce peaceable body that *Pen!*” So you perceive, my good Sir, the fault will be wholly your own, if we do not get on most harmoniously together. — My Grandfather has been particularly picturesque these two days. On coming down stairs on Sunday evening, I found him poring over *Wilhelm Meister!* “A strange choice,” I observed by way of taking the first word with him, “for Sunday reading.” But he answered me quite sharply, “Not at all Miss; the Book is a very *good* Book: it is all about David and Goliath!” — But I must stop. And this is my last Letter! What a thought! How terrible, and yet full of bliss! You will love me forever, will you not, my own Husband? and I will always be your true and affectionate

JANE WELSH.

LETTER 176

T. Carlyle to Miss Baillie Welsh, Templand

SCOTSBRIG, Monday-night, '9 October, 1826.'

"THE Last Speech and *marrying* words of that unfortunate young woman Jane Baillie *Welsh*,"¹ I received on Friday-morning; and truly a most delightful and swan-like melody was in them; a tenderness and warm devoted trust, worthy of such a maiden bidding farewell to the (unmarried) Earth, of which she was the fairest ornament. Dear little Child! How is it that I have deserved thee; deserved a purer and nobler heart than falls to the lot of millions? I swear I will love thee with *my* whole heart, and think my life well spent if it can make thine happy.

In fine, these preliminaries are in the way towards adjustment. After some vain galloping and consulta-

¹ This quotation contains two allusions: the first is to Swift's short article entitled "The last Speech and dying Words of Ebenezer Elliston, who was executed the 2nd May, 1722. Published at his desire for the common good." Robberies with violence were frequent at this time in Dublin; Elliston had been caught and condemned to be hanged, and Swift improved the occasion by writing and publishing, in Elliston's name, what purported to be his "Last Speech and dying Words," wherein he states, amongst other things, that he has left a complete list of the names, etc., of all his confederates, with directions that it be sent to the Government the moment another robbery should take place. The thieves and robbers believed that the Speech was the real work of Elliston, and it effectually arrested crime in the district for some time afterwards.

The second allusion is to the old ballad, called "The unfortunate Miss Bailey," for which see *ante*, Letter 102, *n*.

tion, I have at length got that certificate which the Closeburn Session in their sapience deem necessary ; I have ordered the Proclaiming of Banns in this Parish of Middlebie, and written out a Note giving order for it in your Parish of Closeburn. Pity, by the way, that there is no man in the Closeburn Church possessed of any little fraction of vulgar earthly logic ! It might have saved me a ride to Hoddam Manse this morning (the good Yorstoun my native Parson was away), and a most absurd application to the "glass Minister" my neighbour. One would think that after fair *crying* three times through the organs of Archibald Blacklock, this certificate of celibacy would be like gilding refined gold, or adding a perfume to the violet : for would not my existing wife, in case I had one, forthwith, at the first hum from Archibald's windpipe, start up in her place, and state aloud that *she* had "objections" ? — But I will not quarrel with these Reverend men ; *laissez les faire*, they will buckle us fast enough at length, and for the *How* I care not.

Your own day, Tuesday, as was fitting, I have made mine. Jack and I will surely call on Monday evening at Templand, most likely *after* tea ; but I think it will be more commodious for all parties that we sleep at the Inn. You will not see me on Monday-night ? I bet two to one you will ! At all events I hope you will on Tuesday ; so, as Jack says, "it is much the same."

All hands are sorting, packing, rummaging and rioting here. To Jane I read her part of your Letter ; she will accompany us in our Edinburgh sojourn with all the pleasure in the world. Jack will bring her out, when we want her : she may try the household for awhile ; if it suit she will have cause to love her Sister for her life long.

Your Mother will take down this Note to the Minister, and appoint the hour? I think, it should be an early one, for we have far to go. Perhaps also she might do something towards engaging post-horses at the Inn; but I suppose there is little fear of failure in that point.

Do you know aught of wedding-gloves? I must leave all that to you; for except a vague tradition of some such thing I am profoundly ignorant concerning the whole matter. Or will you give *any*? *Ach du guter Gott!* Would we were off and away, three months before all these observances of the Ceremonial Law!

Yet fear not, Darling; for it must and will be all accomplished, and I admitted to thy bosom and thy heart, and we two made *one life* in the sight of God and man! O my own Jane! I could say much; and what were words to the sea of thoughts that rolls thro' my heart, when I feel that thou art mine, that I am thine, that henceforth we live not for ourselves but for each other! Let us pray to God that our holy purposes be not frustrated; let us trust in Him and in each other, and fear no evil that can befall us. My last blessing as a Lover is with you; this is my last Letter to Jane Welsh: my first blessing as a Husband, my first kiss to Jane Carlyle is at hand! O my Darling! I will always love thee.

Good night, then, for the last time we have to part! In a week I see you, in a week you are my own! Adieu *Meine Eigene!*

In haste, I am forever yours,

T. CARLYLE.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE greater part of the little Poems which appear in this Appendix were written in 1822, at an early stage of the acquaintance of Carlyle and Miss Welsh. They are called by their authors "unspeakable jingles," "trash of verses," &c.; and, indeed, taken as a whole, the collection has no great poetical merit, although some of the verses are decidedly above the average of first attempts at writing poetry. They were evidently hastily written, in half-hours of leisure, chiefly for the sake of amusement, and they were not sufficiently submitted to the file afterwards. The principal fault to be found in them is that they too often "break the laws of metre"; but as neither writer ever swore allegiance to these laws, or claimed to be a poet, the fault is perhaps the less unpardonable. Despite this failing, however, the little Poems seem to me worth reading, both for the ideas and sentiments which they express, and for the light they throw on the thoughts and feelings of the writers. The verses are all referred to in the contemporary Letters, or the Notes to them, which they help materially to explain and elucidate.

All the Verses by Carlyle which appear here, have been in print before, except Nos. 13 and 15. These two are not inferior to the others, and they are included herein for reasons that will be readily apparent to every reader.

Should any wicked critic feel it his duty to criticise adversely these harmless little Poems, I would recommend him first to write a better collection himself, on the same subjects, and then before publishing it, to ponder well the meaning of the following "Epigram from the French," which I find in Jonathan Swift's Works:—

"Sir, I admit your general rule,
That ev'ry poet is a fool,
But you yourself may serve to show it,
That ev'ry fool is not a poet."

No. 1. THE FISHER

Translated from the German of Goethe

[1822]

The water rushed, the water swelled,
A Fisher floating there,
Calm gazing on the hooks he held,
Felt little joy or care.

Cool to the heart, no heed he gave
But to his flick'ring lines ;
When lo ! uprising from the wave
A beauteous mermaid shines.

She softly spoke, she softly sang
" Ah ! cruel ! wherefore wish
With wit of man, and wiles of man,
To lure my harmless fish ?

Couldst thou but know how merry plays
The minnow down below,
Thou'dst haste with me where pleasure stays
To hide from toil and woe.

Does not the moon, does not the sun
In ocean love to bathe ?
And do they not more bright return
When they have breathed the wave ?

Does Heaven's vast dome allure thee not,
Here glass'd in lucid blue ?
Does thine own image lure thee not
Down to eternal dew ? "

The water rushed, the water swelled,
It laved his naked foot ;
His heart with fond desire was filled
As at Love's soft salute.

She sang, she charmed, tho' awing him,
 More wild his bosom burned ;
 Half-leaning—she half-drawing him—
 He sank and ne'er returned.

J. B. WELSH, *corrected by* CARLYLE.

No. 2. AN INDIAN MOTHER'S LAMENT

Translated from "Atala"

[1822]

My new-born Babe ! why doth thy Mother weep,
 In grief to see thee cradled in thy tomb ?
 The little bird when grown hath food to seek,
 And in the desert bitter grains are found !—
 Thine eyes have not known tears, nor hath thy heart
 To Man's destroying breath yet been exposed.
 The fragrant rose that withers in the bud,
 With all its sweet perfume doth pass away,
 As thou, my Boy, with all thine innocence.
 Ah ! thou art happy ! thou hast only known
 A Mother's kisses and a Mother's smiles.¹

J. W.

No. 3. THE WISH

[1822]

Oh for a valley far away !
 Where human foot hath never been,
 Where sunbeams ever brightly play,
 And all is young and fresh and green.

¹ The original reads as follows :—"Pourquoi te pleuré-je dans ton berceau de terre, O mon nouveau-né ? Quand le petit oiseau devient grand, il faut qu'il cherche sa nourriture ; et il trouve dans le désert bien des graines amères. Du moins tu as ignoré les pleurs ; du moins ton cœur n'a point été exposé au souffle dévorant des hommes. Le bouton qui sèche dans son enveloppe passe avec ses parfums, comme toi, O mon fils, avec toute ton innocence. Heureux ceux qui meurent au berceau ! ils n'ont connu que les baisers et les souris d'une mère."—"Atala,"—"Les Chasseurs."

Oh for a valley far away !
 Where human tongue ne'er uttered sound,
 Where envy, hate and treachery
 Have never yet an entrance found.

Where cunning never spread her wile,
 Where passion's fever never burned,
 Leaving the heart a fun'ral pile
 Of hopes to desolation turned.

Where one might only see for tears
 The sparkling drops by Morning shed,
 When with a mother's love she cheers
 The little flow'ret's drooping head.

Where one might only hear for sighs
 The balm that gentle Zephyr breathes,
 When thro' the scented grove he flies
 Kissing the dewdrops from its leaves.

There could I spend my peaceful days
 With only One my fate to share—
 One in whose soul-depths I might gaze
 And find my thoughts reflected there.

With One who cared for none but me,
 Whose looks of love were all my own,
 Whose heart would for my image be
 A living tomb when I am gone.

.

J. W.

No. 4. I LOVE

[1822]

I love the mountain torrent dashing
 Downward in thunder loud and hoarse ;
 With snow-white foam, in fury lashing
 The rugged rocks that break its course.

I love the thunder rumbling, crashing,
Peal after peal along the skies ;
While from the clouds the lightning flashing
In deathful splendour, strikes, destroys.

I love the soul no danger fearing,
Still onward rushing to its goal,
All that impedes its course down-bearing,
Proud, fiery, brooking no control.

J. W.

‘ No. 5. A “SIRVENTE”

Translated from Pierre Cardenal

[1822]

From east to west let it be told
I'll give the honest lumps of gold ;
If all the rascals will agree
To pay, each one, a pin to me.
I will without delay pay down,
To ev'ry man of sense a crown,
If all the silly fools that live
Will each to me a farthing give.

The good one-half mankind have done
I could write down upon my thumb ;
And all the wisdom I have heard
Would scarcely fill a calling card.
To feed all that are men of worth
A pigeon's wing would be enough ;
But would you give the knaves a treat
You may cry “come good folks and eat” !

J. W.

No. 6. A LOVE SONG

Translated from the Provençal

[1822]

As one who longs for cooling drink,
The cruel fires of thirst to quench,
When haply on one verdant branch
He saw two apples, stays to think
Which may be best, and both desires :
So was I by two maids perplexed ;
But now at last my choice is fixed ;
And one true love my soul inspires.

As Ocean foams and harshly roars
When two fierce winds assail his breast,
In fearful strife from east and west ;
Nor ever to repose restores
His waves till one is overthrown ;
So by two flames my soul assailed
Raged till the fiercest flame prevailed ;
And now I live for thee alone.

J. W.

No. 7. THE WISH

[1822]

How oft the gen'rous with the selfish mated,
Must drag in lonesomeness a galling chain !
How oft the two that might have loved are fated
Never to meet, or soon to part again !

Yet here—while in earth's wilderness we linger,
Desponding, sick at heart, unnerved in hand,
Young Hope by times will point with cherub finger
To spots of verdure in that "weary land."

Some shadow of the good we're blindly seeking,
Some scene of peace—some maid we might adore,
Will thrill—like music of his far home, meeting
The exile on a friendless foreign shore.

With sighs one asks—O ! might not, could not I,
From heartless bustle, dungeon-gloom of town,
With *her* to love me best, for ever fly,—
'Mid still retirements, make my soul *my own*?

In sunny vales calm homes arise for many ;
The sky, the earth, their glad looks spread for all ;
And may not friendship's balm be wished by any
Whose heart is true, and beats at friendship's call?

Each chained to th' oar by thousand imaged wants,
See Fashion's galley-slaves and Mammon's ply ;
Not theirs the bliss love earned by virtue grants—
By lofty aims and deeds that may not die !

Their wages, gilded straws, for ever leaving,
Might not *one* kindred pair go hand in hand—
The heart's joy with the mind's light interweaving—
To wisdom's haunts, to fancy's fairy land ?

Th' undying minds of every age around us,—
The world's, our being's, mystery to view—
If in us dwelt some thoughts might live beyond us,
To form them, find them hearers "fit tho' few."

In tasks like these were not enough to do ?
In other's arms were not enough to feel ?
Clear as the summer sun our days might flow,
And bright their end be like that sun's farewell.

Vain longings ! vain ! No power will hear me,
To darkness fades my baseless dream ;
No bosom-friend or home may cheer me,
Low toil, pale care sit mocking near me,
My past, my future mates they seem.

A kingly thought with a captive's fate
 Wasteth the heart to misery driven :
 But to steadfast men in their low estate,
 By stern endeavourings, minds elate,
 To light the gloom of life is given.

And noble 'tis, without complaining,
 Our lot to suffer, task fulfil,
 Thro' scowls, neglect, and chill disdaining,
 In pain—alone—our pride retaining,
 Untired work out our purposed will.

Be calmed, my soul ! No act of thine
 With fame can gild thy dreary doom ;
 But whoso walks firm duty's line
 'Mid life's sick mists unstained may shine,
 And—sound is the sleep of the tomb.¹

T.

No. 8. LINES TO LORD BYRON

From his daughter, Ada

[1822]

Father ! what love that word reveals !
 What dreams of bliss to me unknown !
 Sweet sound ! my inmost soul it thrills,
 Like music's saddest, wildest tone.

Father ! Ah ! word pronounced in vain !
 He hears not—echo only hears—
 For ever must I breathe that name,
 Gayless as now—alone—in tears.

¹ The original of Carlyle's "Wish" has been lost. In Mrs. Carlyle's Portfolio, however, there is a printed copy of it in the form of a Newspaper cutting, which bears the initial "T," but no name or date or other means of identification.—Since the foregoing was written I have found the Poem printed in Leigh Hunt's "London Journal," No. 35 (26th November, 1834), and also, in No. 30 (22nd October, 1834), another Poem by Carlyle, written at a later date, called "Drumwhim Bridge."

They tell me oft his cold neglect
Should all my early love efface ;
Would they could teach me to forget
His parting look, his last embrace !

And oft they chide the tear that fills
My eye while list'ning to his fame,
The thought of pride my bosom thrills,
"I am his child !—I bear his name !"

In vain they blame : they are his foes,
He did them wrong—they've cause to hate !
But in my breast the life that glows
Is his—for me to love him's fate.

Oh, still, my Father, joy will steal
Bright on my soul ; while all alone
I read thy words of fire, and feel
Thine cannot be a heart of stone.

I dream each day may end my pain,
That thou, ev'n thou, canst cease to hate ;
That foreign charms may lure in vain,
And home be dear for Ada's sake.

Deceitful hopes ! my years roll on
And each new day is like the past ;
Still, still I live unloved, alone,
Ah ! this fond heart will break at last !

J. W.

No. 9. VERSES WRITTEN AT MIDNIGHT

[1822]

The sun has left the skies
And pass'd the azure waves,
And now reposing lies
In ocean's hidden caves ;

A veil of darkness shrouds
The bright and lovely dome
Of gold and crimson clouds,
Where late his glory shone.

From silver throne on high
The pale, cold queen of night
Irradiates the sky
With melancholy light.
While all the world's asleep,
Alone I wake to gaze
On that cold moon, and weep,
And think of other days.

The night-wind moans around
And wakes the wild harp's tone.
So mournful is that sound
'Twould thrill a heart of stone.
It dies upon the blast,
And now it wildly swells,—
The spirit of the past
Amid such music dwells.

How wild the pang we feel
In such an hour as this!
When o'er the spirit steal
The thoughts of vanished bliss.
Of friends in early youth
When, unsuspecting guile,
We thought kind words were truth,
And trusted every smile.

Of some we once believed
Could ne'er have been estranged,
Whose fondness hath deceived,
Whose hearts and looks are changed ;
Of others who have crossed
Our path—friends of a day—
That scarcely loved, e'er lost,
Like dreams have passed away.

J. W.

No. 10. FAUST'S CURSE

From the German of Goethe

[1822]

If thro' th' abyss of terror stealing
Those touching sounds my purpose stay'd,
Some ling'ring trace of childish feeling
With voice of merrier times betray'd ;
I curse the more whate'er environs
The cheated soul with juggling shews,
Those heart's allurements, fancy's syrens
That bind us to this den of woes.
Accursed first the tinsel dreaming
Of innate worth our spirits weave !
Each hollow form so lovely seeming
That shines our senses to deceive !
A curse on all one seed that scatters
Of hopes our name from Death to save !
On all *as ours* on Earth that flatters
As child or wife, as plough or slave !
A curse on Mammon when with treasures
He tempts to high and hardy deeds ;
When spreading soft the couch of pleasures
The drowsy soul he captive leads !
A curse on juice of grapes deceiving,
On Love's wild thrill, of raptures first !
A curse on hoping, on believing !
And patience more than all be curs'd !¹

Translated by T. C.

("Our armies swore terribly in Flanders, but—it was nothing to this," says the Corporal.)—T. C.

¹ The above translation was first printed in Otilie von Goethe's "Chaos," in the year 1830; and the greater part of it was published in the "Athenæum," January, 1832.

NO. II. A CHILD'S POETICAL LETTER

(JEAN CARLYLE *to* T. CARLYLE)

Brother, I have long lamented
I had never power to write ;
But I'm resolved if I attempt it,
I shall leave no paper white.

When I have learn'd then shall I tell you
Sundry news of every kind ?
No, rather every thought that enters
In within this shallow mind.

I receiv'd your kindest letter,
And had pleasure at the sight,
But it was a shocking grievance
I had never learn'd to write.

My thoughts I'll write at length whenever
I have learn'd to write at all,
And carry on with hopes of mending,
Be it round or be it small.

Tell our Brother John to write us,
And to tell us all he knows :
At present I can only thank him
For the Book he sent with those.

I've read the Book he sent me,
And it truly pleases well,
And every thing in it related
I'm just now prepared to tell.

But my time is all exhausted
And I must draw unto an end :
Besides a worse one by a mortal
Never, never being penn'd.

Mary writes this mean epistle,
 Meanest of the letter kind ;
 To let you know I am in being
 'Tis intended for a sign.¹

J. C.

MAINHILL, 15th February, 1823.

No. 12. TO MISS JANE B. WELSH

[1823 ?]

They chide thee, fair and fervid One,
 At glory's goal for aiming :
 Does not Jove's bird, its flight begun,
 Soar up against the beaming Sun,
 Undazed, in splendour flaming ?

Young brilliant creature, even so
 A lofty instinct draws thee :
 Heaven's fires within thy bosom glow,
 Could Earth's vain fading vulgar show
 One hour's contentment cause thee ?

The gay saloon 'twere thine to tread,
 Its stateliest scenes adorning ;
 Thine *be*, by nobler wishes led,
 With bays to crown thy lofty head
 All meaner homage scorning !

Bright maid ! as oft thy fate I view
 Unuttered thoughts come o'er me ;
 Enrolled 'mong Earth's elected few,
 Lovely as morning, pure as dew,
 Thy image stands before me.

¹ In sending an "exact copy" of this to Miss Welsh, Carlyle wrote :
 "As you are curious in oddities, this may amuse you for a moment. The
 author is a little black-eyed creature about nine years of age, scarce bigger
 I think than a good quartern loaf. Her amanuensis is nearly two years
 older. This is 'lispings in numbers' with a vengeance."

O ! that on fame's far-shining peak,
 With great and mighty numbered,
 Unfading laurels I could seek !
 This longing spirit then might speak
 The thoughts within that slumbered.

O ! in the battle's wildest swell,
 By hero's deeds to win thee !
 To meet the charge, the stormy yell,
 Th' artill'ry's flash, its thund'ring knell,
 And thine the light within me !

What man, in Fate's dark day of power,
 While thoughts of thee upbore him,
 Would shrink at danger's blackest lour,
 Or faint in life's last ebbing hour,
 If tears of thine fell o'er him ?

But O ! if war's grim sweeping blast
 In vict'ry's radiance ended,
 What heaven to find my [Jane] at last,
 Within my arms to fold her fast,
 Our souls forever blended !¹

T. C.

No. 13. TO JANE B. WELSH ²

[1825]

So fare thee well, but not forever,
 My best, my loved, my only Jane !
 What tho' in sadness now we sever,
 Grieve not, we part to meet again.

Tho' storm and darkness lour above thee,
 Burns thro' it still one glad bright ray :
 Think that in life and death I love thee,
 While wandering far my desert way !

¹ This poem appeared in Froude's "Life of Carlyle," all except the fifth and last stanzas.

² At the close of her visit to Hoddam Hill.

Now one fond kiss, and then I leave thee,
Not *yet* our strife with Fate is o'er !
Weep not, let not our parting grieve thee,
Ere long we meet to part no more !

T. CARLYLE.

19th September, 1825.

No. 14. MY OWN FOUR WALLS

[1829 ?]

The storm and night are on the waste,
Wild thro' the wind the herdsman calls,
As fast, on willing nag, I haste
Home to my own four walls.

Black tossing clouds, with dim light-glimmers,
Envelope Earth, like seven-fold palls :
But Wifekin waits and coffee simmers
Home in my own four walls !

A home and wife I too have got,
A hearth to blaze whate'er befalls !
What needs a man that I have not
Within my own four walls ?

King George has palaces of pride,
And armed grooms must ward his halls :
With one stout bolt I safe abide
Within my own four walls.

Not all his men may sever this,
It yields to Friends', not Monarch's calls,
My whinstone house my castle is,
I have my own four walls.

When fools or knaves do make a rout,
With gigman dinners, balls, cabals,
I turn my back, and shut them out ;
These are my own four walls.

The moorland house, tho' rude it be,
 May stand the brunt, when prouder falls,
 'Twill screen my wife, my Books and me,
 All in my own four walls.¹

T. C.

No. 15. ABSENT

[1831 ?]

Far in desert's depths, what Rose is flowering !
 Wherefore droops that Rose to-day ?
 'Tis her "Sun" is hid, so clouds are lowering :
 Love ! thy Lover's far away !

For she's mine, my own, that Rose of Roses,
 And my cheek her leaves do kiss,
 All its Heaven-perfume her heart uncloses :
 Can a mortal taste such bliss !

Roses few, and aye with pruning, weeding,
 Wealth or Pomp or Power will yield ;
 But the fairest Rose of God's own Eden
 Blooms in my poor rocky field !

O thou Heart's-Rose, droop not, cease thy pining !
 Long forsaken canst thou be ?
 Bright to-morrow morn thy Sun is shining ;
 Over the hills, I haste to thee.

What for me were Earth, or what were Heaven ?
 And my own lov'd One not there ?
 Might a life, a death with her, be given,
 Fate ! I had no other prayer.²

T. C.

¹ The *locus* of this Poem is clearly Craigenputtock, which Carlyle elsewhere often calls the "Whinstone House," or the "Moorland House." He entered into occupation there in the end of May, 1828. "King George" (the Fourth) died in January, 1830; the date of the Poem, therefore, lies somewhere between those two dates,—most probably in Autumn, 1829.

² This was certainly written during the Craigenputtock period. We may suppose that Carlyle had gone down to see his Mother at Scotsbrig,

No. 16. THE NEW YEAR, 1832

(To Jeannie Welsh Carlyle, with her Mother's Love)

A year—another year—has fled !
Here let me rest a-while,
As they who stand around the dead
And watch the funeral pile.
This year, whose breath has passed away,
Once thrilled with life—with hope was gay.

But, close as wave is urged on wave,
Age after age sweeps by,
And this is all the gift we have,
To look around—and die !
'Twere vain to dream we shall not bend,
Where all are hasting to an end.

What this new waking year may rise,
As yet is hid from me ;
'Tis well a veil which mocks our eyes,
Spreads o'er the days to be ;
Such foresight who on earth would crave,
Where knowledge is not power to save !

It may be dark,—a rising storm
To blast with lightning wing
The bliss which cheers—the joys that warm ?
It may be doomed to bring
The wish that I have reared as mine,
A victim to an early shrine !

But—be it fair, or dark—my breast
Its hopes will not forgo ;—
Hope's rainbow never shines so blest
As on the clouds of woe :
And seen with her phosphoric light
Even affliction's waves look bright !

and that he composed this little Poem on the eve of his return to his "Rose-goddess." The paper and handwriting point to 1831, when Carlyle was writing "Sartor Resartus." The verses have never been in print before.

But I must steer my bark of life
 Towards a deathless land :
 Nor need it fear the seas of strife
 May it but reach the strand
 Where all is peace—and angels come,
 To take the outworn wanderer home.¹

[G. WELSH.]

TEMLAND, *Friday morning.*

NO. 17. TO A SWALLOW BUILDING UNDER OUR EAVES

[1834]

Thou too hast travelled, little fluttering thing,
 Hast seen the world, and now thy weary wing
 Thou too must rest.
 But much, my little Bird, couldst thou but tell,
 I'd give to know why here thou lik'st so well
 To build thy nest.

For thou hast passed fair places in thy flight ;
 A world lay all beneath thee where to light ;
 And strange thy taste !
 Of all the varied scenes that met thine eye,
 Of all the spots for building 'neath the sky,
 To choose this waste !

¹ It is altogether likely that it was these "sad Verses" by her Mother, which Mrs. Carlyle copied and sent to Jeffrey in a Letter of 1832, and which Mr. Froude says ("Life," ii. 293) Jeffrey "carried with him to the 'glades' of Richmond to muse upon them, and fret over his helplessness." At anyrate, the Verses then sent, were certainly not those on the "Swallow," for these were not written until the Spring of 1834,—a few weeks before Carlyle and his Wife removed from Craigenputtock to London.

Mrs. Welsh's Verses are certainly sad in tone, but they are also very pretty and touching, and seem to indicate that she, too, had some poetic talent. Carlyle remarks in the "Reminiscences," that he once said to his Wife, "Your mother, my Dear, has narrowly missed being a woman of genius."

Did Fortune try thee? was thy little purse
Perchance run low, and thou afraid of worse
Felt here secure?
Ah no! thou need'st not gold, thou happy one!
Thou know'st it not! Of all God's creatures, man
Alone is poor!

What was it then? Some mystic turn of thought,
Caught under German eaves, and hither brought,
Marring thine eye
For the world's loveliness, till thou art grown
A sober thing that dost but mope and moan,
Not knowing why?

Nay, if thy mind be sound, I need not ask,
Since here I see thee *working* at thy *task*,
With wing and beak.
A well-laid scheme doth that small head contain,
At which thou work'st, brave Bird, with might and main,
Nor more need'st seek!

In truth, I rather take it thou hast got,
By instinct wise, much sense about thy lot,
And hast small care
Whether an Eden or a Desert be
Thy home; so thou remain'st alive, and free
To skim the air!

God speed thee, pretty Bird! May thy small nest
With little ones all in good time be blest!
I love thee much!
For well thou managest that life of thine,
While I!—O ask not what I do with mine!
Would it were such!¹

[T. C.]

THE DESERT, 1834.

¹ As this Poem is plainly dated "The Desert, 1834," it must have been written in the Spring of that year some time between the "return of the Swallows" ("about the 13th of April," says White of Selborne) and the departure of Carlyle from Craigenputtock to London (8th of May, 1834).—Though the Poem is not signed, the internal evidence that it is Carlyle's

is very strong: "Some mystic turn of thought, caught under German eaves," "*working* at thy *task* with wing and beak," and "hast small care whether an Eden or a Desert be thy home" are distinctively Carlylean. Moreover, Carlyle has endorsed the Poem "copied by Jane," which seems to show that it was not originally *written* by her, otherwise his endorsement would have read "Jane's Poem," or something to that effect. Again, Carlyle's Niece, who lived with him for over thirteen years and knew more about his writings than any other person, has initialled the Poem "T. C." in her copy of Mr. Froude's "Life of Carlyle." If I doubted that Carlyle wrote the "Swallow," I should be inclined to attribute the Poem to Mrs. Welsh rather than to Mrs. Carlyle. So far as I can find, Jane Welsh gave up the practice of writing poetry, long before her marriage. I know of no Poem by her of later date than 1822.—Finally, the tone of sadness traceable in the "Swallow," is not due to a feeling of being incarcerated at Craigenputtock (as Mr. Froude supposed), but to a natural heart-sickness at the thought of being obliged by circumstances to bid it, and "bonny Scotland" too, a long farewell, and to set forth to seek a new home in another land.

APPENDIX B. NOTE ONE

SARTOR RESARTUS

As the Book called *Sartor Resartus* has been so often referred to in the foregoing pages, a few words regarding its origin and history, and its value as an autobiography of Carlyle in his early years, may not be entirely useless or uninteresting.

Carlyle's earliest reference to this Book is contained in a Letter to his Mother, dated 10th October, 1830, in which he says, "For the last three weeks I have been writing by task-work again, and get along wonderfully well. What it is to be I cannot yet tell,—whether a Book or a string of Magazine Articles; we hope the former; but in either case it may be worth something." On the 19th of the same month he tells Dr. Carlyle, then living in London, "What I am writing at is the strangest of all things; begun as an Article for *Fraser*; then found to be too long (except it were divided in two); now sometimes looking almost as if it would swell into a Book. A very singular piece, I assure you! It glances from Heaven to Earth and back again in a strange satirical frenzy, whether *fine* or not remains to be seen. . . . *Teufelsdröck* (that is the title of my present *Schrift*) will be done (so far—fifty pages) to-morrow."—On the 28th of the same month, he notes in his *Journal*, "Written a strange piece 'On Clothes': know not what will come of it."

Again, he writes to Dr. Carlyle on the 12th of November following: "I wrote to William Fraser about his Magazine, and that *Teufelsdröck* paper of mine, which I have now resolved not to make a Book of; but, if I have opportunity, two Articles, and the germ of more."

Then, on 21st January, 1831, to Dr. Carlyle: "Will

you go to Fraser and get from him by all means my long Paper entitled '*Thoughts on Clothes*': . . . of this . . . I have taken a notion that I can make a rather good *Book*, and one, above all, likely to produce some desirable impression on the world even now. . . . I can devise some more biography for *Teufelsdrack*; give a second deeper part, in the same vein, leading through Religion and the nature of Society, and Lord knows what. . . . I fear perfect *anonymity* is now out of the question; however swear everyone to secrecy, for I mean to speak fearlessly if at all."

In his *Journal*, under date 7th February, 1831, there is this entry: "Sent to Jack to liberate my *Teufelsdrack* from Editorial durance in London, and am seriously thinking to make a Book of it. . . . Through *Teufelsdrack* I am yet far from seeing my way; nevertheless materials are partly forthcoming."

Then on the 10th of February, he explains to Dr. Carlyle: "My plan is . . . to labour at my *Teufelsdrack* Book, and bring it up to London in my pocket so soon as it is ready. . . . It is full of dross, but there is also metal in it, and the thing still lives and produces with me."

Carlyle was frequently obliged to intermit his labours on *Teufelsdrack*,—Articles for the Magazines which promised more prompt and sure payment, being needful to meet current expenses.

On 6th June, 1831, he tells Dr. Carlyle: "I am daily busy with *Teufelsdrack*, which I calculate on finishing early next month. But, like James Brown, 'I write dreadfully slow.' It will be one of the strangest volumes ever offered to the English world, whether *worth* anything is another question. At all events, I determine to finish it, and bring it up to London in my pocket during this very Session of Parliament (if I can)." Again, on the 12th of July: "I am struggling forward with *Dreck*, sick enough, but not in bad heart. . . . It was the best I had in me; what God had given me, what the Devil shall not take away. . . . I should have written to our Mother to-night, but cannot, I am so far back with my 'Chapter on Symbols.' I am at the 132nd page: there may be some 170; but much of it is half written."

To his Mother he writes on the 19th of July: "My Book is drawing to a close, and I must be off to London by *the end of the month*. . . . I hope the writing will be pretty well over by perhaps the middle of next week."

Carlyle set off for London on 4th August, 1831, taking the completed Manuscript with him. But he could not find a Publisher (not even on the "half-profits" system, which he rightly held to be a "no-profits" system, except to the Publisher), and was obliged to bring it home with him unpublished, when he and Mrs. Carlyle returned to Craignputtock about the 1st of April, 1832.

On the 8th of August, Carlyle writes in his *Journal*: "Shall *Teufelsdröckh* be printed, at my own cost and charges, so soon as I have earned sufficient for that end? We shall see." It lay dormant during the remainder of the year.

In the beginning of 1833, Carlyle took *Teufelsdröckh* to Edinburgh, and it is mentioned in a Letter of 27th January, thus: "My old Manuscript is lying by me quiet: there is no likelihood of its being printed this Winter."

On 10th February of the same year, he writes: "*Teufelsdröckh* cannot see the light this Summer, tho' I remain determined to spend sixty Pounds on him, when convenient: . . . *Teufelsdröckh* (whom, by the bye, I mean to call *Teufels-dröckh*) is worth little, yet *not* worth nothing; I fancy there are from four to five hundred young men in the British Isles whom he would teach many things."

Again, on the 17th of May, 1833, he writes: "My chief project for the Summer is to cut *Teufelsdröckh* into slips, and have it printed in *Fraser's Magazine*."

The next reference to *Teufelsdröckh* is in the Letter to James Fraser, of 27th May, 1833, in which Carlyle gives Fraser a full description of the Work, and offers it to him for publication piecemeal in *Fraser's Magazine*.

Fraser accepted the offer, and Carlyle notes in his *Journal* (7th July, 1833): "*Teufelsdröckh* now to be printed piecemeal in *Fraser's Magazine*; am for beginning to adapt it for that destination to-day. In the text nothing to be changed: some Introduction, &c., will be needed."

On 10th September, 1833, there is the following entry in Carlyle's *Journal*: "Read a good half of the remaining

Manuscript of *Teufelsdröckh* (now called *Sartor Resartus*), and divided it into seven Magazine Papers for Fraser." The first instalment appeared in *Fraser* in November, 1833; and the last in August, 1834.

The first edition in Book form, promoted by Le-Baron Russell, appeared in America (with a Preface by Emerson) in 1836; and a second American edition followed the next year. The first English edition came out in July, 1838.

The foregoing is an account of the genesis of *Sartor Resartus*, given mainly in Carlyle's own words. In his *Reminiscences* he says that the writing of the Book cost him nine months of labour. The labour, as we have seen, was intermittent (there being at times other more pressing work to be attended to), and the nine months is Carlyle's estimate of the aggregate time spent in writing it.

It may be added that the original *Teufelsdröckh*, which was finished by the 28th of October, 1830, sent to Fraser and then recalled, constitutes Book I. of the printed *Sartor*: it occupied in Carlyle's Manuscript a space almost exactly proportional to the space covered by Book I. in *Sartor* as we now have it.¹

It was therefore Books II. and III. that Carlyle added to the original *Teufelsdröckh* when he had finally decided to make a Book instead of a series of Magazine Articles out of his manuscript:—Book II. being what he termed "Some more biography," and Book III. the "Second deeper part, in the same vein, leading through Religion, and the nature of Society and Lord knows what."

As Carlyle has admitted that *Teufelsdröckh*, the hero of *Sartor Resartus*, represents himself, it will naturally be expected that the biographical details of Book II. are

¹ The truth of this will appear from the following consideration: The original "Teufelsdröckh" covered 50 pages of Carlyle's MS., and he estimated that the complete Work would extend to 170 pages of MS. Book I. in the Library Edition contains 77 pages of print, and the whole Work 288 pages. Now, by the "Rule of Three," since 50 MS. pages make 77 print pages, 170 MS. pages should make 262 pages of print. This falls short of the actual pages in the Book "Sartor" by 26,—a shortage almost exactly accounted for by the fact that there are very nearly a total of 26 blank pages, at the beginnings and ends of Chapters and between the different Books.

biographical details of Carlyle himself. And so they are, to a great extent, as even a very slight comparison of the Second Book of *Sartor* with Carlyle's *Reminiscences*, *Letters*, &c., will clearly demonstrate. Besides Carlyle has explicitly stated that some at least of the incidents in the life of the hero of *Sartor* are incidents in his own life. For example, he says in the *Reminiscences* (I. 46), "He [my Father] took me down to Annan Academy on the Whitsunday morning, 1806; I trotting at his side in the way alluded to in *Teufelsdröckh*." He also said: "The incident in the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer occurred quite literally to myself in Leith Walk." "Mythically true is what *Sartor* says of his Schoolfellows." There are besides these many other instances in which Carlyle has referred to *Sartor* as giving facts in his own life.

But did not Carlyle write it down that (1) "*Sartor* is not to be trusted in details"; and (2) "Nothing in *Sartor Resartus* is fact; symbolical myth all, except that of the incident in the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer"? The answer is, No; these are misquotations.¹ What Carlyle wrote was: "*Sartor* here, in good part; not to be trusted in details!" And (2) "Nothing in *Sartor* thereabouts is fact (symbolical myth all) except that of the 'incident in the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer.'" ² The omission of the words "here in good part" and "thereabouts" materially changes Carlyle's meaning. The first of these quotations is from a note in which Carlyle corrects what Dr. Althaus says regarding the Annan Academy, and Carlyle's studies there. The point of the note will be made clearer by citing a little more of it: "*Sartor* here, in good part; not to be trusted in details! 'Greek,' for example, consisted of the *Alphabet* mainly; 'Hebrew' is quite a German entity,—nobody in that region, except my Revd. old Mr. Johnstone, could have read one sentence of it to save his life. I did get to read Latin and French with fluency," &c.

The second quotation is a correction of what Dr. Althaus

¹ Froude's "Life of Carlyle," i. 17, 101.

² These are taken from Carlyle's notes and corrections of an Article entitled "Thomas Carlyle," by Dr. Friedrich Althaus, which appeared in the "Unsere Zeit" (Leipzig), July, 1866.

says of the Leith Walk incident ; and is intended as a caution to readers of *Sartor* not to take too literally all that Teufelsdröckh says "thereabouts," though the incident itself is acknowledged to be authentic.

It does not follow that because *Sartor* is mythical "here" or "thereabouts" (that is, in one or two specific instances) it is to be set down as mythical from beginning to end. Much of the Book may therefore be true biography for anything that Carlyle has said to the contrary. But in a work like *Sartor*, in which tropes of all sorts, poetical, literary and classical allusions, abound like flowers in May, and imagination disports itself with little restraint, any reader who would accept all the details as literal facts would be the reverse of wise.

Carlyle in his Letters to Miss Welsh has given an account of his life from June, 1821, to October, 1826, in far greater detail and with more minuteness and accuracy than any that has hitherto appeared. *Sartor Resartus*, Book II., from the Fifth Chapter to the last but one, treats of the corresponding period of Teufelsdröckh's life ; and if readers will take the trouble to compare these two accounts minutely and carefully, they will undoubtedly find that this part of *Sartor* is founded on incidents and experiences in Carlyle's own history, and is in fact a sort of autobiography for the period mentioned, delineated poetically, spiritually and figuratively, yet true to life as regards the chief incidents and events, and not far from the truth even in the details. Here, space forbids anything beyond a slight attempt at such a comparison : there can be given only a few hints which may serve to indicate how close a parallel might be drawn between the story of Teufelsdröckh and that of Carlyle. Readers, who are so disposed, may at their leisure extend and complete this parallel ; they will find it an easy and not unprofitable or uninteresting task, if taken up and pursued with an open and candid mind. For the sake of getting the chronology right, a start must be made with the First Chapter of Book II.

CHAPTER I. ("Genesis")

In this Chapter Teufelsdröckh gives some account of his Native Village, *Entepfuhl*, his Parents, Andreas Futteral and Gretchen, his birth and infancy.

Entepfuhl (Duckpond) has long been identified with Ecclefechan, Carlyle's birthplace; old inhabitants of the Village, only a few years ago, remembered the site of the Duckpond; and used to tell that it stood in what is now the back area of the house which contained the Village Post-office until about 1904. The Pond was visible from the front windows of the "Arched House" in which Carlyle was born, being on the opposite side of the main street, and a little to the northward, that is, farther up the stream which runs through the Village. *Gretchen* is the German diminutive or endearative of Margaret, the name of Carlyle's Mother. *Gneschen* is the diminutive of Diogenes (God-born), the Christian name of Teufelsdröckh. *Futteral* means literally case, cover, sheath or box; and so, that which protects or holds together. *Futter* is the German word for fodder. Perhaps Carlyle used the word *Futteral* to signify merely Protector, Husband, or Provider.

The time covered by this Chapter would seem to extend from 4th December, 1795, to about 1798.

CHAPTER II. ("Idyllic")

Here Teufelsdröckh writes of the "Happy season of Childhood," of "Entepfuhl standing 'in trustful derangement' among the woody slopes," "the paternal Orchard," "the little Kuhbach [Cowbrook] gushing kindly by, among beech-rows," "the brave old Linden" standing in the centre of the Village, "the Stage-coach" wending through the hamlet, northwards "in the dead of night," southwards "visibly at eventide," "the annual Cattle-fair," &c. &c.

"Woody slopes" abound round Ecclefechan, some of which reach a considerable height, for example, Brownmoor Wood, to the south of the Village, and Woodcockair, by

Hoddam Castle and the high table-land on which Repentance Tower stands. The "little Kuhbach" is the small stream which runs down by the side of the main street, passing close by the front of the "Arched House." The "beech-rows" are a remarkable feature of the district, especially those on each side of the road which leads from the Village to Hoddam Castle and Repentance Tower,—a distance of two miles. This double line of beeches over-arching the road forms an avenue very little, if at all, inferior to the celebrated one leading from Versailles to the Trianon. The "paternal Orchard" was not attached to the Arched House, but to another and larger house which stood higher up the Village and a little back from the main street, to which Carlyle's Father removed in 1798. On the coping of this Orchard wall Gneschen was wont to eat his supper. This house, Carlyle's second home, no longer stands, but its site is well-known.

Carlyle remembered the "flitting," and used to tell in his later years, how he bore a hand in the removal, with childish glee, adding (correctly) that his age would then be "between two and three." "The brave old Linden" is gone long ago, though its site is still remembered. The "Stage-coach" in those days ran regularly between London and Glasgow, *viâ* Ecclefechan, carrying mails, passengers and luggage. The "annual Cattle-fair" is often mentioned in Carlyle's Letters.

Time, 1798 to 1804.

CHAPTER III. ("Pedagogy")

In this Chapter Teufelsdröckh treats of his Education, and describes his Schools, Schoolmasters and Schoolmates. He says: The Entepfuhl Schoolmaster "did little for me, except discover that he could do little: he, good soul, pronounced me a genius fit for the learned professions; and that I must be sent to the Gymnasium, and one day to the University." His Schoolmates at the "Hinterschlag Gymnasium" were "rude and tyrannical": "Only at rare intervals did the young soul burst-forth into fire-eyed



* Room where I was born; to the middle of
that Arch was my father's House, Village of Se-
-defechan, 4 Dec 1795. - T. Carlyle (Chelsea, 5 ju-
-ly, 1871) -

rage, and with a stormfulness under which the boldest quailed, assert that he too had Rights of Man, or at least of Mankin." After about three years in this Gymnasium, and at a date¹ not given in *Sartor Resartus*, Teufelsdröckh has become a "University man," at the "Nameless" University. Finds poor instruction here, but a good Library: reads innumerable Books in almost all cultivated languages, and lays the foundation of a Literary Life.—So far Teufelsdröckh.

Carlyle's account of his own Schools and Schoolmasters, and College Professors is very similar to the above. Citing again from his notes on Dr. Althaus's "German Biography," we find the following: "Tom Donaldson's School at Ecclefechan,—a severely correct young man, Tom; from Edinburgh College, one Session probably; went afterwards to Manchester, &c., and I never saw his face again, tho' I still remember it well, as always merry and kind to me, tho' harsh and to the ill-deserving severe. Hoddam School afterwards, which then stood at the Kirk.² 'Sandy Beattie' (subsequently a Burgher Minister in Glasgow; I well remember his 'examining' us that day) reported me 'complete in English,' age then about seven; that I must 'go into Latin,' or waste my time: Latin accordingly; with what enthusiasm! But the poor Schoolmaster did not himself know Latin." The Annan Academy came next. "Mythically true" (the note continues) "is what *Sartor* says of his Schoolfellows. . . . Unspeakable is the damage

¹ The year is not given in "*Sartor*," but it is stated that the particulars are culled from the Bag *Sagittarius*. The sun enters this Sign in November, and it was in this month that Carlyle set out for the first time for the University of Edinburgh.

Carlyle adopted the quaint device of labelling the Paper-bags which held the biographical documents, by the names of the Six Southern Zodiacal Signs, *Libra*, *Scorpio*, *Sagittarius*, &c. These names are intended to indicate the nature of the contents as well as the date, that is, they are both symbolical and chronological.

It is stated that the Paper-bags were finally deposited in the British Museum. Carlyle told me that a lady, deeply interested in the "Clothes Philosophy," once wrote to him for more explicit information as to the particular department of the Museum in which he had placed them. After repeated attempts she had failed to get sight of them!

² Hoddam Kirk, at the "Cross-roads," about midway between Ecclefechan and Hoddam Castle.

and defilement I got out of those coarse unguided tyrannous cubs,—especially till I revolted against them, and gave stroke for stroke,” &c. Carlyle used to say that it was one of these counter strokes, the *a posteriori* application of his foot, as a farewell to the discomfited enemy, which suggested to him the name *Hinterschlag Gymnasium* (Kickbehind Academy).

The “Nameless” University is of course the Edinburgh University. Carlyle’s career here is so well known from his *Reminiscences*, &c., and agrees so obviously with Teufelsdröckh’s at the “Nameless,” that no commentary seems needed to identify them.

Referring to the close of this Chapter, it may be observed that Carlyle, having in view the expediency of completing what he had to say under “Pedagogy” and of so concluding his “dim arras-picture of these University years,” introduces by anticipation two events which properly belong to a later period: namely, his Study of Law and his intimacy with Herr Towgood. “Herr Towgood” is here applied to Charles Buller, the “young person of quality from the interior parts of England,” whom Carlyle first met in January, 1822. Carlyle’s School and University years, so far as his Arts Course was concerned, ended in 1813; but he was again brought into a certain relationship with his *Alma Mater* by these two events mentioned: his own attendance on Professor Hume’s Scots-Law Lectures in 1819–20, and his entering Charles Buller in Professor Dunbar’s Greek Class in the University, in 1822. There is therefore a little “overlapping” or anticipation of events,—a departure from the proper sequence of time, of which Carlyle is well aware; for he leaves to the reader the task of “weaving it in at the right place.”

Time (exclusive of Herr Towgood and Law Study)
1804–1813.

CHAPTER IV. (“Getting under Way”)

Teufelsdröckh “on quitting College” finds difficulty in “getting under Way,” “in fitting Capability to Opportunity.” The hardest problem is always this first one:

"To find by study of yourself, and of the ground you stand on, what your combined inward and outward Capability specially is." "Thus in a whole imbroglio of Capabilities, we go stupidly groping about, to grope which is ours, and often clutch the wrong one: in this mad work must several years of our small term be spent." "His first Law-Examination he has come through triumphantly¹ . . . but . . . what avails it? There is next to no employment to be had. Neither for a youth without connexions, is the process of Expectation very hopeful in itself." Teufelsdröckh is given up "as a man of genius." Gets a little aid from "private Tuition." "Earns bread-and-water wages, by his wide faculty of Translation." Introduction to the Zähdarm Family.

The history of Teufelsdröckh's "Getting under Way" as told in this Chapter corresponds to and is based on Carlyle's own history for the period which intervened between the completion of his Arts Course in the University (Spring 1813) and the time of his introduction to Miss Welsh (May, 1821).

Carlyle's difficulties in finding a career suited to his capacities, were similar to Teufelsdröckh's; and he implies that he had "clutched" the wrong career when he engaged in Schoolmastering, and, at a later period, in the Study of Law. These were successively abandoned in disgust, and he, like Teufelsdröckh, had recourse to "private Tuition" and to "Translation."

The part of Carlyle's biography, corresponding to Teufelsdröckh's as related vaguely and more or less symbolically in this Chapter, "Getting under Way," was a long and important one. In the Summer of 1814 he was appointed Mathematical Master in the Annan Academy; this post he held for two years. In November, 1816, he began his duties as Master of a School in Kirkcaldy, opened in opposition to the School in which Edward Irving had

¹ Both Carlyle and Teufelsdröckh stopped half-way in their Law studies; and when Carlyle says "the world has since seen him [Teufelsdröckh] a public graduate" of Law, he is merely making a pleasant allusion to the letters which are appended to his name on the title-page of the German Work on Clothes, "J. U. D.," Doctor of Civil and Canon Law, LL.D.

been teaching since 1812. Carlyle remained here until November, 1818, when both he and Irving abandoned Schoolmastering and came over the Frith to live again in Edinburgh.¹ Shortly before leaving Kirkcaldy (probably about the beginning of October), Irving introduced Carlyle to Miss Margaret Gordon. On returning to Edinburgh Carlyle soon engaged in private tuition. In his *Journal*, under date 1st December, 1818, there is this entry: "I began on Monday 30th November to teach Mr. Robertson Astronomy and Trigonometry." "Mr. Saumarez, on Wednesday, 9th December," is the next entry. Then, on 27th January, 1819: "Some days ago I began German with one Jardine from Göttingen, or rather Applegarth." In February following, Carlyle translated a Paper by Berzelius on Chemistry; and soon afterwards went home to Mainhill for the Summer. The Winter of 1819-20 was spent in studying Scots Law,—Carlyle taking Professor Hume's Lectures on that subject. In the Spring or early Summer of 1820, he relinquishes Law. Makes his last call on Margaret Gordon, at Kirkcaldy, *probably* soon after his Law Lectures were concluded (end of March), and *certainly* not later than about the twentieth of April,² for he is home at Mainhill for the Summer, by the 3rd of May. Miss Gordon's final Letter of farewell to Carlyle is dated 28th June, 1820.

By November the 21st, 1820, Carlyle is back again in Edinburgh. The Winter is spent in study, reading, tutoring, and attempts in Literature, which meet with but little success. His health is very bad, outlooks unpromising and spirits at the lowest.

It may be noted that Carlyle's introduction of the Zähdarm (Buller) Family at the end of this Chapter, is somewhat out of the proper order of time; for he did not meet the Bullers till January, 1822, some months after he had made Miss Welsh's acquaintance. This departure from

¹ It is frequently stated, but quite erroneously, that "Carlyle succeeded Irving" as teacher at Kirkcaldy.

² In a Letter to Dr. Matthew Allen, dated "Mainhill, Ecclefechan, 19th May, 1820," Carlyle writes: "I left Edinburgh about the twentieth of April, spent ten days with Mr. Irving about Glasgow, and arrived in these parts some two weeks ago."

chronological order is not a mistake or mis-recollection on Carlyle's part, but is done with a purpose: it was convenient and every way desirable to finish what he had to say on "Getting under Way" before beginning a new Chapter,—that on "Romance." And the connection with the Buller Family as Private Tutor, was an important step in the process of "Getting under Way."

The Zähdarm incident is said to be taken from the Bag *Pisces*, the receptacle for miscellaneous matters, odds and ends, "stuffed" into it without order: and consequently the Zähdarm incident, taken from it, may be treated under any date most convenient to the writer.

Time (exclusive of the Zähdarms) from 1813 to June, 1821.

CHAPTER V. ("Romance")

Teufelsdröckh here describes himself, just before meeting Blumine, as being "now a man without Profession." "Quitting the common Fleet of herring-busses and whalers, . . . he desperately steers off on a course of his own, by sextant and compass of his own."

This is exactly Carlyle's case too: he had renounced the study of Law, and abandoned the intention of becoming a Professional man: he had decided to try to earn his living by "his own right hand" and in his own independent way, by translating, by private teaching when it could be had, and by persistent attempts in Literature,—before the time of his introduction to Miss Welsh.

"A certain Calypso-Island detains him [Teufelsdröckh] at the very outset; and as it were falsifies and oversets his whole reckoning." "But how came the Wanderer¹ [Teufelsdröckh] into her circle? Was it by the humid vehicle of *Æsthetic Tea*, or by the arid one of mere Business?"

¹ "Wanderer" and "Wanderings," as used in "Sartor," have for most part a figurative meaning only—wanderings in the mind's eye, Horatio. Carlyle forewarned his readers of this fact, when he wrote, in Bk. i. Ch. iii.: "With reference to his [Teufelsdröckh's] great historic and statistic knowledge, and the vivid way he had of expressing himself like an eye-witness of distant transactions and scenes, they called him the *Ewige Jude*, Everlasting, or as we say, Wandering Jew."

Was it on the hand of Herr Towgood,¹ or of the Gnädige Frau, who, as an ornamental Artist, might sometimes like to promote flirtation ? ”

Was the Calypso-Island Haddington ; and the Calypso Jeannie Welsh ? And was Herr Towgood Edward Irving ; and the Gnädige Frau Mrs. Welsh ? We know for certain that, on or about the 26th of May, 1821, Irving escorted Carlyle out to Haddington to introduce him to Miss Welsh and her Mother ; that Irving and Carlyle staid some three or four days in this Town, and called on the Welshes more than once before they returned home (to Edinburgh) on the 31st of May ; and that Carlyle instantly fell deeply in love with Miss Welsh.

“ How came it that the Wanderer advanced thither with such forecasting heart, by the side of his gay host ? Did he feel that to these soft influences his hard bosom ought to be shut ; that here, once more, Fate had it in view to try him ; to mock him, and see whether there were Humour in him ? ”

Teufelsdröckh's words “ once more ” are very significant ; for Irving had introduced Carlyle to Margaret Gordon in Autumn, 1818 ; it had not turned out a fortunate affair for Carlyle ; and in going again on a similar errand by the side of the same gentleman, Carlyle's heart felt the natural foreboding that here, *once more*, Fate had it in view to try him ; to mock him.

“ But now let us conjecture that the so presentient Auscultator² has handed-in his *Relatio ex Actis* ; been invited to a glass of Rhine-wine ; and so, instead of returning dispirited and athirst to his dusty Town-home, is ushered

¹ Towgood (Toughgut) in “ Sartor ” seems to be a generic name for men of sound digestion, perhaps the facetious and rather envious appellative of a dyspeptic to any eupeptic individual. The whole of the Buller Family were Towgoods, “ Zähdarms,” which is the exact German equivalent of the word. The Herr Towgood of Chapter vi., whom Teufelsdröckh sees on his wedding trip, going off to England, is evidently Edward Irving, who at that time was of sound enough digestion (having “ the nerves of a buffalo,” as Carlyle says) ! The incident seems to have been suggested to Carlyle by his having actually seen, and for a little accompanied, Irving and *his* Blumine on their marriage jaunt, in the neighbourhood of Kin-naird.—See “ Reminiscences,” ii. 109.

² One who has passed his first professional examination in Law.

into the Garden-house, where sit the choicest party of dames and cavaliers."

Teufelsdröckh was an Auscultator *before* he met Blumine for the first time. Carlyle was in a similar position before he met Miss Welsh, but not so before he met Miss Gordon.

Teufelsdröckh had a presentiment that he might have to return "dispirited and athirst to his dusty Town-home"; in like manner, had Carlyle not been kindly received at Haddington, he would have returned (probably on foot as he had come) to his "dusty Town-home," 16, Carnegie Street, Edinburgh,—a distance of sixteen miles.¹

Who were the members of this "choicest party"? No one knows, or will ever know with certainty! They *may have been* the following: Mrs. Welsh (the Gnädige Frau, Gracious Lady); Miss Welsh (Blumine); Miss Augusta Sibbald (daughter of the Minister for whom Irving was to preach); Carlyle (Teufelsdröckh); Edward Irving (Towgood); Dr. Benjamin Welsh (Dr. Welsh's brother, now living in Haddington); the "gallant Captain" mentioned in Carlyle's first Letter to Miss Welsh (Philistine); for all these people were actually seen on the occasion of this first visit to Haddington, as stated in Carlyle's Letters and *Reminiscences*.

"Next moment he [Teufelsdröckh] finds himself presented to the party; and especially by name to—Blumine! . . . Always must the Wanderer remember, with a certain satisfaction and surprise, how in this case he sat not silent, but struck adroitly into the stream of conversation; which thenceforth, to speak with an apparent not a real vanity, he may say that he continued to lead. . . . The self-secluded

¹ If we assume that Margaret Gordon was the Original of Blumine, a difficulty as to place at once arises; for Carlyle first met her in Irving's lodgings, which could not well have been more distant than a few furlongs from Carlyle's lodgings in the small Town of Kirkcaldy. Had the meeting between Teufelsdröckh and Blumine taken place here, however it had turned out, there could have been no reason for Teufelsdröckh's returning "*athirst* to his dusty Town-home." The absence too of any Gnädige Frau (other than Irving's Landlady, or House-keeper), seems fatal to the assumption. As Carlyle married Miss Welsh and not Margaret Gordon, it seems clear enough that it was in Mrs. Welsh's House at Haddington, and not in Irving's lodgings at Kirkcaldy, "where, for joy and woe, the tablet of his Destiny lay written."

unfolds himself in noble thoughts, in free, glowing words; his soul is as one sea of light, the peculiar home of Truth and Intellect; wherein also Fantasy bodies-forth form after form, radiant with all prismatic hues."

That Carlyle distinguished himself in conversation on the occasion of his first meeting with Miss Welsh, is evident from what she writes to him in her Letter of 11th November, 1822: "Without plan, hope, or aim, I had lived two years [since her Father's death in 1819], when my good Angel sent you hither. I had never heard the language of talent and genius but from my Father's lips; I had thought that I should never hear it more. You spoke like him;¹ your eloquence awoke in my soul the slumbering admirations and ambitions that *His* first kindled there. I wept to think the mind he had cultivated with such anxious, unremitting pains, was running to desolation; and I returned with renewed strength and ardour to the life that he had destined me to lead."

"To our Friend [Teufelsdröckh] the hours seemed moments; holy was he and happy: the words from those sweetest lips [Blumine's] came over him like dew on thirsty grass."

In his first Letter to Miss Welsh, Carlyle speaks of "those few Elysian hours we spent together lately." And a week after his return from Haddington, he tells his Brother, "I was happy as a lark in May. . . . I came back so full of joy, that I have done nothing since but dream of it." Miss Welsh's Letters (and how much more her spoken words!) were to Carlyle "like dew on the mown grass."²

Teufelsdröckh says that "in Town they [Blumine and he] met again: day after day, like his heart's sun, the blooming Blumine shone on him. . . . In free speech, earnest or gay, amid lambent glances, laughter, tears, and often with the inarticulate mystic speech of Music; such was the element they now lived in; in such a many-tinted, radiant Aurora, and by this fairest of Orient Light-bringers must our Friend be blandished, and the new Apocalypse of Nature unrolled to him."

¹ "Like him" (her Father) was Miss Welsh's very highest praise.

² Letter No. 71, *ante*.

The Letters of Carlyle and Miss Welsh prove that she came to Town (Edinburgh) in the Autumn following their first meeting, and took lessons in German from him. Thus they would meet "day after day"; nor would the "inarticulate mystic speech of Music" be wanting, for Miss Welsh was at that time an enthusiast in this art.

The description which Teufelsdröckh gives of his state of forlorn misery, friendlessness, seclusion, &c., in the times just before meeting Blumine, is precisely similar to Carlyle's account of *his* condition before meeting Miss Welsh. In his Letter to her, of 18th November, 1822, he writes: "If I might paint to you how wasted and woe-begone I was—a prey to black inquietudes which had made me sick of existence itself and reckless of aught good or evil that it had to offer me,—when I saw you, like an inhabitant of some more blessed sphere, as I almost believed you, descend upon my desolate path which was fast going down to the gates of Death,—and call me back to light and life, and hopes more glorious than I had ever dared to form; if—But I must not go on with this: you would laugh," &c.

Teufelsdröckh was disapproved by Blumine's Guardian, for reasons similar to those which induced Mrs. Welsh to look unfavourably on Carlyle, after a little while: lack of worldly means, want of a Profession, or a "name in the world," and uncertain outlook for the future.

The "final scene" which ends the "Romance" in *Sartor*, distinctly resembles Carlyle's parting from Miss Welsh, as detailed in Letter 10, *ante*, and those adjoining.

Besides the foregoing coincidences in Teufelsdröckh's and Carlyle's "Romance," there are many other minor points that might be noted, if time and space would allow. For example, the statement that "Blumine's was a name well-known to him; far and wide was the fair one heard of, for her gifts, her graces, her caprices;" and the description of Blumine's person and disposition,—her "dark eyes," "dark tresses," and the abundance of "naphtha fire" in her veins; of her being "much more enchanting than your mere white Heaven-angels of women"; of Teufelsdröckh's having seen her "in public places" before being introduced to her; the epithet "fairest of Orient Light-bringers" applied

to her; and the query, "Was her real name Flora, then?"

For, in his *Reminiscences* Carlyle mentions having heard Irving and James Brown, each of whom had been successively Miss Welsh's Tutor in Haddington, talking of her, in their tour through the Trossachs, in 1817. And of hearing W. Graham of Burnswark speak of her, &c. &c. Miss Welsh, too, had "dark eyes," "dark tresses," and her temperament was not lacking in naphtha-fire; and having Gypsy blood in her veins, she was not a mere white Heaven-angel, but one dark enough to be often mistaken by strangers for a foreigner, as she tells us in her Letters.

Carlyle's having seen Miss Welsh in public places is not at all unlikely, and may easily have occurred, for instance, at meetings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, as Mrs. Welsh and her Daughter were in the habit of frequenting these Assemblies, whither Irving and Carlyle as theological or ex-theological students, are known to have gone occasionally.

The "fairest of Orient Light-bringers" is merely a poetical expression denoting that the Town-visits of the fairest young lady of Haddington, which is directly east of Edinburgh, brought light and joy and gladness to Carlyle in his then dreary, lonely, lodging-house life.

"Was her real name Flora, then?" is an allusion to Miss Welsh's being often called "The *Flower* of Haddington,"¹—an allusion which Mrs. Carlyle would fully understand and appreciate when she first read *Sartor* and pronounced it, in face of all the world, "a Work of genius."

Time, from May, 1821, to about February, 1822.

CHAPTER VI. ("Sorrows of Teufelsdröckh")

The sorrows are due to his "sudden bereavement in this matter of the Flower-goddess"² (Blumine). But whatever

¹ "The Frankfort picture of Craigenputtock and *Teufelsdröckh* written there, under the eye of the Flower of Haddington!"—"Letters of T. Carlyle," i. 339.

² It is well known that Miss Welsh was exceedingly fond of flowers, especially roses. The House at Haddington had (and still has) a beautiful

Teufelsdröckh's feelings may have been in reflecting on this loss, he *says* little about it: "No sooner has that heart-rending occurrence fairly taken place, than he [Teufelsdröckh] affects to regard it as a thing natural, of which there is nothing more to be said."

This is how Carlyle appeared to Irving to bear his parting from Miss Welsh on the occasion of the "Lovers'-quarrel" which took place about the beginning of February, 1822. For Irving writes to Miss Welsh, from Carlyle's lodgings, 3, Moray Street, shortly after this occurrence: "Carlyle is not so aggrieved as I could have figured. Such a parting from you," &c.

The remainder of this Chapter is mostly taken up with an account of Teufelsdröckh's wanderings, which seem to be partly symbolical or imaginary (the after-effects of his "Calenture" or fever-dream) and partly real. The real wanderings are a little ante-dated, which Carlyle artfully excuses by blaming the "chaotic nature of these Paper-bags." Teufelsdröckh first visits his native Village, or comes just within sight of it. Carlyle, too, goes home to Mainhill in August, 1822, and may only have seen Ecclefechan "from the distance." Teufelsdröckh's next recorded flight, that "into the wilds of Nature," is anticipated by something like a year. The wilds referred to are apparently in the neighbourhood of Kinnaird among the Perthshire Highlands. Here are the "Mountains," the "Primitive rocks," and the spot where "the Valley closes-in abruptly" near the Pass of Killiecrankie. Carlyle, however, did not go to Kinnaird until May, 1823. In *Sartor* Carlyle explains this discrepancy in time, by stating that he finds Teufelsdröckh's "Notice" of this wandering "separated from the former [that to his native Village] by a considerable space, wherein, however, is nothing noteworthy." Here, in the wilds of Nature, Teufelsdröckh sees Herr Towgood and Blumine on their wedding-jaunt,

Flower-garden; so also at Comley Bank, on a small scale; and even at Craigenputtock, "the loneliest and dreariest spot in all the British dominions," one of her first cares was to have rose-bushes planted. See also in Appendix A, No. 15, where she is addressed by Carlyle as "That Rose of Roses."

going "onwards to Heaven, and to England." This dramatic situation was probably suggested to Carlyle by his having actually seen Edward Irving and *his* "Blumine" (the "dear Isabella") in this locality just after their marriage and before they went home to London.

Possibly these wanderings are made to follow more closely on the rejection of Teufelsdröckh by Blumine, in *Sartor* than they did in reality, for the sake of artistic effect? Or the object may be simply "mystification," which Teufelsdröckh "delighted in." It must be remembered, too, that Carlyle is not writing his life, but only utilising some salient points, or leading events in it, as topics on which to give expression to the thoughts that were burning within him for utterance.

Time, February to July, 1822?

CHAPTER VII. ("The Everlasting No")

The "Sorrows" grow wider and deeper; all goes contrary to Teufelsdröckh's wishes; there is nothing but negation. "All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied." In addition "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief." But still Teufelsdröckh clings to Truth and follows Duty. Then comes the turning point: "Fear" and "whining Sorrow" change into "Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance," and emphatic denial of the Devil's Everlasting No, culminating in the incident of the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer.

In a Note on Dr. Althaus's Article, above mentioned, Carlyle writes (in 1866): "Nothing in *Sartor* thereabouts is *fact* (symbolical *myth* all) except that of the 'incident in the Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer,'—which happened quite literally to myself in Leith Walk, during those three weeks of total sleeplessness, in which almost my one solace was that of a daily bathe on the sands between Leith and Portobello. Incident was as I went *down* (coming *up* I generally felt a little refreshed for the hour); I remember it well and could go yet to about the place. . . . One year (perhaps the 2nd or 3rd before), I had thought of attempting to become an

Advocate : . . . and I did read some Law-books, and attend (Hume's) *Lectures* on Scots Law. . . . I was *solus*, wandering as in endless labyrinths, flinty, muddy, thorny, under a sky all *leaden*."

This not only authenticates the "incident," but also fixes the date of it: for it was in 1819-20 that Carlyle was studying Law, and the second or third year *after* that would be either 1822 or 1823. The incident could not well have occurred in 1823, because Carlyle left Edinburgh for Mainhill on the 13th of May, before the bathing season began, and was settled at Kinnaird by the end of the month. The incident therefore probably happened in 1822. This probability, derived from Carlyle's Note, is converted into almost a certainty by the fact that it was in the Summer of this year that Carlyle suffered most from sleeplessness, and as a palliative indulged in almost daily sea-bathing, as his Letters abundantly prove. In a Letter to his Mother, dated 2nd June, 1822, Carlyle writes: "The bathing does me great good; and you need be under no apprehension of my drowning, for the bottom is smooth shelving sand or pebbles. I stay but a moment in the water, and never go near the end of my depth: . . . Unfortunately my mode of sleeping is too irregular to admit of my bathing constantly before breakfast; tho' I manage this often, and almost always go some time in the day." This description of the bathing-place which he was now frequenting, applies exactly to the shore between Leith and Portobello. As to his want of sleep, he writes to Miss Welsh on 13th July, 1822: "I give out no subject of versification: I have no right being a *craven* at present." He was a "craven," or man admittedly *vanquished*, through sleeplessness. *Sartor* says the incident occurred "one sultry Dog-day"; Carlyle spent a month this year, from 7th August to 7th September, at Mainhill: therefore the incident most likely happened in July or early in August, 1822.

It has been said that the Leith Walk affair occurred "in June, 1821." This is only a guess, and not a very good one: for there are no Dog-days in June; and it was not until the very end of 1821 that Carlyle removed from 16, Carnegie Street to 3, Moray Street (now called Spey Street),

"half-way down Leith Walk," almost in the "Suburbs"¹ of Edinburgh (the "French Capital") and within easy distance of the shore between Leith and Portobello.² The weather of June, 1821, was, according to Carlyle's Letters, characterised by "Easterly breezes and icy vapour," which would render bathing impracticable. Moreover, Carlyle was "happy as a lark" in June, 1821, while at the time of the Leith Walk incident his misery had apparently reached a climax.

Time, July till Autumn, 1822.

CHAPTER VIII. ("Centre of Indifference")

Teufelsdröckh's Protest begins to bear good fruit. Though "his unrest was but increased," he has found "a fixed centre to revolve round." He intermits, if he does not altogether cease, "to eat his own heart." He finds wholesomer food in clutching round him outwardly on things external to himself,—taking an interest in the affairs of the world rather than brooding exclusively over his own private misfortunes. He engages in extensive travels; looks with interest on Towns and Cities; meets great Men, for whom he "ever had the warmest predilection." His inner man prospered "under so much outward shifting." "For the matter of spiritual culture, if for nothing else, perhaps few periods of his life were richer than this." "Too heavy-laden Teufelsdröckh? Yet surely his bands are loosening; and one day he will hurl the burden far from him, and bound forth free and with a second youth."³

That Carlyle began soon after the Leith Walk incident to turn his attention more than formerly on other than personal matters, is evident from his Letters of the time.

¹ "In Edinburgh properly so-called I do not appear once in the fortnight," writes Carlyle from 3, Moray Street.—"Early Letters," ii. 118.

² "Not above a mile," Carlyle calculated.—"Early Letters," ii. 70.

³ After his wanderings were over, Carlyle wrote to Miss Welsh (22nd May, 1825): "I am already *wonderfully* better than when you saw me: I am a driveller if . . . I do not grow completely well. The thought of this is like a second boyhood to me."

In the end of July, or beginning of August, 1822, he writes to Miss Welsh: "Something must be done, if I would not sink into a mere driveller." "In hours of leisure," he again writes to her, on the 11th of September, "I even yet hope to effect something permanent before winter expires." A little later, he sends her a translation of Faust's Curse—an indication of his growing interest in German Literature. Early in November, he writes to her: "I sit and spin out plans which it would require a lifetime to complete." He searches persistently for some subject to write a Book upon. He very nearly engages with Boyd for a volume on Milton; he proposes to write *Tales*, and makes a beginning with "Cruthers and Jonson," before the year 1822 ends. Then in March, 1823, he begins his first Book, a *Life of Schiller*; shortly after this he undertakes to translate *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*.

In May, 1823, begin Carlyle's wide wanderings referred to in this Eighth Chapter of *Sartor*. He goes to Mainhill on the 13th of May; thence, *viâ* Edinburgh, to Kinnaird in Perthshire; comes home again in July; goes back once more to Kinnaird; in November, he visits Edinburgh; goes back to Kinnaird for the remainder of the winter. Leaves Kinnaird for good in the Spring of 1824. Goes again to Mainhill; is back in Edinburgh by the end of May, and sails to London early in June.

In London he sees some "great Men," Coleridge, Campbell, Lockhart, Allan Cunningham, and others; and here also, a little later, he receives his first Letter from the great Goethe. With Schiller, too, he has much communion in spirit: completing his *Life of the Poet*, and almost agreeing to translate the whole of his Works. From London he travels to Birmingham, Manchester, &c.; on coming back to London, he almost immediately visits Paris (going *viâ* Dover); from Paris he returns to London ("from Capital to Capital"); afterwards visits Birmingham once more; and comes home to Mainhill on 19th March, 1825. His "wanderings" are even yet not ended: for he runs up to Edinburgh to get Books, &c.; returns to Mainhill, and stays there till Hoddam Hill is got ready for his occupation.

That Carlyle made great progress in spiritual and intel-

lectual attainments during this long period of almost constant shifting of place, is amply evident from even a hasty perusal of his Letters.

Time, Autumn, 1822, to May, 1825.

CHAPTER IX. ("The Everlasting Yea")

"I paused in my wild wanderings" (says Teufelsdröckh); "and sat me down to wait and consider; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. . . . Let me rest here: for I am way-weary and life-weary."

Carlyle paused in his wild wanderings, and sat down to wait and consider, when he got home to Dumfriesshire after his multifarious travels. In his first Letter to Miss Welsh, from Hoddam Hill, he writes: "It is many a weary year since I have been so idle or so happy. . . . I hope this humour will not be my final one. It is rather a sort of *Holy Truce*, a *Pax Dei* which exhausted nature has conquered for herself from all the fiends that assaulted and beset her."

Of his locality Teufelsdröckh says: "Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains; . . . Or to see, as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages that lay round my mountain-seat."

The "locality" above described is undoubtedly Hoddam Hill. This little Farm stands on a high table-land far-famed for its views. The Mountains round it are Helvellyn, Skiddaw, Criffel, Hartfell, Christenberry, &c.; and the nine Towns and Villages, Carlisle, Annan, Lockerby, Ecclefechan, Eagle'sfield, &c. Carlyle has described the views from Hoddam Hill, in the *New Letters and Memorials*, as follows: "For the rest it had the finest and vastest prospect all round it I ever saw from any House: from Tyndale Fell to St. Bees Head, all Cumberland as in amphitheatre unmatchable; Galloway mountains, Moffat mountains, Selkirk ditto, Roxburgh ditto;—nowise indifferent ever to me." Teufelsdröckh's description gives, in fact, such a perfect picture of Hoddam Hill and the

views visible from it, that no one who has ever been in that locality can fail to identify it with the place in which Teufelsdröckh enjoyed the beneficent effects of his "healing sleep."

Many of the thoughts and sentiments expressed in this Chapter bear a striking resemblance to those in Carlyle's first Letters from Hoddam Hill. The Chapter abounds in ideas and expressions similar to, and sometimes identical with, those in the Books which Carlyle is known to have been reading or translating while living here : for example, Wilhelm Meister's *Travel*, the works of Musäus, Jean Paul, Novalis, Tieck, &c.

Teufelsdröckh says in this Chapter : "Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is . . . it is simply this : 'Fellow, see ! thou art taking more than thy share of Happiness in the world, something from *my* share : which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not ; nay, I will fight thee rather.'"

In his *Journal* Carlyle says that the foregoing "thought suggested itself one wet evening, on the Trailtrow Moss,¹ as I came from Annan in 1825."

Teufelsdröckh's "Conversion" took place here while he was living "on the high table-land," and is thus described : "Divine moment, when over the tempest-tossed Soul, as once over the wild weltering Chaos, it is spoken : Let there be Light ! . . . The mad primeval Discord is hushed ; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments ; deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath ; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above : instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, Heaven-encompassed World."

Here, too, was the scene of Carlyle's "Conversion." In the *Reminiscences* he writes : "This year [at Hoddam Hill, 1825-26] I found that I had conquered all my scepticisms, agonising doubtings, fearful wrestlings with the foul and vile and soul-murdering Mud-gods of my Epoch ; had escaped as from a worse than Tartarus . . . and was emerging, free in spirit, into the eternal blue of ether. . . .

¹ The Trailtrow Moss lies between Annan and Hoddam Hill.

I understood well what the old Christian people meant by their 'Conversion,' by God's Infinite Mercy to them."

Time, May, 1825, to October, 1826.

CHAPTER X. ("Pause")

There is but little biography in this final Chapter of Book II. Perhaps in the following there is an intended hint of Carlyle's settlement, after his marriage, at Comley Bank, Edinburgh: "His [Teufelsdröckh's] outward Biography, therefore, which, at the Blumine Lover's-leap, we saw churned utterly into spray-vapour, may hover in that condition, for aught that concerns us here. Enough that by survey of certain 'pools and splashes'¹ we have ascertained its general direction; do we not already know that, by one way and another, it *has* long since rained-down again into a stream; and even now, at Weissnichtwo, flows deep and still, fraught with the *Philosophy of Clothes*, and visible to whoso will cast eye thereon?"

And the following may allude to his removal from Edinburgh, in the Spring of 1828, to Craigenputtock: "Everywhere cast out, like oil out of water, from mingling in any Employment, in any public Communion, he has no portion but Solitude, and a life of Meditation." For in 1827 Carlyle made enquiries about a Professorship in the newly established University of London; and applied for the Chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of St. Andrews. He failed to obtain either; and soon afterwards removed to Craigenputtock (May, 1828).

There is a little more biography of Teufelsdröckh in the last Chapter of *Sartor Resartus* (Book III. Ch. xii.), which is also strictly applicable to Carlyle's life, and part of which must have been written either after he had decided to go to London with the MS. of *Sartor* in his pocket, or in London itself.

In this Chapter Teufelsdröckh is represented as having

¹ Cf. The "splashes and puddles" of Scotsbrig where Carlyle lived for a short time just before his marriage.—See *ante*, Letter 164.

had communications with the Saint-Simonian Society ; and as having said of this Society when he received its "Propositions" : "Here also are men who have discovered, not without amazement, that Man is still Man ; of which high, long-forgotten Truth you already see them make a false application."

Carlyle also had communications with the Saint-Simonian Society ; and, in a Letter to Goethe, of 22nd June, 1831, he expresses his opinion of the Saint-Simonians in words almost identical with Teufelsdröckh's : "I should say they have discovered and laid to heart this momentous and almost forgotten Truth, *Man is still Man*, and are already beginning to make false applications of it."

The final sentence in the last paragraph but one in *Sartor* reads thus : "Our own private conjecture, now amounting almost to a certainty, is that, safe-moored in some stillest obscurity, not to lie always still, Teufelsdröckh is actually in London !"

Carlyle left Craigenputtock, as above said, on 4th August, 1831, and reached London on Monday the 8th. He was "safe-moored," first at 6, Woburn Buildings, Tavistock Square, then (soon after Mrs. Carlyle's arrival, 1st October) at 4, Ampton Street, Gray's Inn Road, London.

NOTE TWO

MARGARET GORDON AND BLUMINE

Margaret Gordon was born in Charlottetown, the capital of Prince Edward Island, in August, 1798, and was the second Daughter of Dr. Alexander Gordon, a native of Aberdeenshire, who had emigrated to the New World, lived for some time in Charlottetown, then afterwards in Halifax, Nova Scotia, where he died, still comparatively young. Dr. George James Guthrie, an Army Surgeon, on duty in Halifax (at, or soon after, Dr. Gordon's death), married the widow Mrs. Gordon, and became the Father of one Daughter and two Sons, half-sister and half-brothers of

Margaret Gordon. Dr. Guthrie served in the Army with distinction for several years, and afterwards settled in London in the expensive and fashionable quarter of Berkeley Square.¹

Margaret Gordon was adopted by her Aunt (Father's Sister), Mrs. John Usher, and was living at Kirkcaldy, Fife, in charge of this Guardian during at least a part of the time that Carlyle and Irving were Schoolmasters there. Margaret became a pupil of Irving's, taking private lessons from him, for a short time. Carlyle made her acquaintance through Irving, but not until within a month or two of his leaving Kirkcaldy in November, 1818. In his *Reminiscences* Carlyle writes of Miss Gordon and his acquaintance with her in the following terms: "By far the cleverest and brightest, however [of the Kirkcaldy young ladies], an Ex-pupil of Irving's, and genealogically and otherwise (being poorish, proud, and well-bred) rather a kind of alien in the place, I did at last make acquaintance with (at Irving's first, I think, tho' she rarely came thither); some acquaintance;—and it might easily have been more, had she and her Aunt and our economic and other circumstances liked.² She was of the fair-complexioned, softly elegant, softly grave, witty and comely type, and had a good deal of gracefulness, intelligence and other talent.³ Irving too, it was sometimes thought, found her very interesting, could the Miss Martin bonds have allowed, which they never would. To me who had only known her for a few months, and who within a twelve or fifteen months saw the last of her, she continued for perhaps some three years a figure hanging more or less in my fancy, on the usual romantic, or latterly quite elegiac and silent terms."⁴

Carlyle left Kirkcaldy (having resigned his Schoolmaster-

¹ His exact address was 2, Berkeley Street, Berkeley Square. The Street leads from the Square into Piccadilly.

² By "other circumstances" Carlyle probably refers to Miss Gordon's previous engagement,—of which more, further on.

³ A friend of mine, who has lately (July, 1908) examined the miniature of Margaret Gordon, painted about the time of her marriage (1824), tells me that she is depicted there with "blue eyes and yellow hair," and appears to conform exactly in every other respect to Carlyle's word picture of her as here given.

⁴ "Reminiscences," ii. 57.

ship there) on or about the 20th November, 1818, following Irving to Edinburgh, who had preceded him by a few days. Carlyle's acquaintance with Margaret Gordon probably began in October (after his School opened for the Winter Session), in 1818. After his introduction to Miss Gordon, and so long as he remained resident in Kirkcaldy,—some ten weeks at the most, Carlyle may have met her frequently, or only at rare intervals,—more likely the latter; for, had they met often there would have been a greater intimacy than is expressed by Carlyle's words, "some acquaintance." There is no evidence to show that they met more than once after Carlyle left Kirkcaldy; but they saw each other in London many years afterwards (1840 or so), though they did not acknowledge their former acquaintance, by speech or salutation.

Their intimacy was therefore of very short duration: but there was sincere friendship between them, and high appreciation of each other, as Miss Gordon's two Letters to Carlyle very clearly indicate.¹

Margaret Gordon's first Letter to Carlyle runs as follows:—

"PALACE CRAIG [Airdrie],
"June 4th, 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—Having understood from our friend Mr. Irving that you had returned to Dumfriesshire, I take the opportunity this information affords me, of thanking you for the very friendly visit you paid us some time ago at Kirkcaldy. Perhaps you may be inclined to think, when I had last the pleasure of seeing you, I might have expressed my sense of the favour, without now writing a formal epistle on the subject. This, had our short interview permitted, I would have gladly done. *You* know the cause that prevented me. If your call had been merely one of ceremony

¹ As Carlyle was in the habit of preserving the Letters he received, and as there are only two from Miss Gordon to be found in his collection, it may reasonably be assumed that there never were more from her. Both of these Letters bear the Airdrie Post-mark, and travelled *viâ* Glasgow to Ecclefechan. Margaret appears to have been then staying with friends at Airdrie (eleven miles east of Glasgow),—her Aunt, at the time, being in Paisley.

such as I am accustomed to receive from the ordinary *herd* of men, I should neither have seen nor declared any obligation. Originating, as it did, from a true greatness of soul, the result of feelings little akin to those that occupy common minds, I should be wanting in duty to myself as well as [to] you, did I not show by my gratitude that the kindness was bestowed on one, who is at least sensible of its extent. To *possess* your *friendship*, I have often said, was a constant source of delight to me ; to *lose* it, you may believe, was proportionably painful. Your coming to see me in Fife, appeared not only a proof of the noble triumph you had obtained over your weakness (forgive the expression), but seemed to be an intimation that I still was thought worthy of that esteem with which you formerly honoured me. If ever I may have an opportunity of hearing from yourself that in this my last conjecture I am not mistaken, time alone can determine. In a few weeks I bid adieu, for a season, to Caledonia's rugged shores where I leave, still blest to gaze on her ever-varying charms, a few and but a few friends whose partial regard has soothed many a sorrowing moment of my past existence.¹ When I may again behold the scene which so many circumstances endear to my recollection, is very uncertain. I mentioned to you I intended to remain a twelvemonth in London : my Mother will not consent to my being so much a stranger in my family, as so long a separation endangers. Yet why entertain you with so much egotism ? If it offends you, blame my vanity, for I will confess *that* alone urges me on ; it is only the assurance that such a relation of my proposed wanderings will not be troublesome to a *friend*, a name by which I hope I shall always call *you*.

"I was very sorry to hear your health had been impaired by the severity of your Winter's study. Your 'native breezes' I trust, have already produced the desired effect of removing the consequences of your stay in Edinburgh. You must not wear out your constitution by such continual application. Still, permit me to entreat you not to desert the path Nature has so evidently marked you should walk

¹ Margaret Gordon appears from Irving's Letters to Carlyle to have had a lover from whom she was separated at this time.

in. It is true, it is full of rugged obstacles, interspersed with little to charm the sense ; yet these present a struggle which is fitted only for minds such as *yours* to overcome. The difficulties of the ascent are great, but how glorious the summit ! keep your eyes fixed on the end of your journey, and you will begin to forget the weariness of the way. You see I have taken the liberty of a friend, I had almost said of a *Sister*, who is probably addressing you for the last time, and who would regret to learn hereafter that Nature, in spite of her unusual bounty, had been cruelly opposed.

"May Fortune prove propitious to you, in every part of your voyage through life ; or, if this is indeed too much happiness for any one mortal in this changing scene, may the storms of adversity ever find you prepared to resist their overwhelming violence, and ever be followed by that peaceful calm, the virtuous alone are capable of enjoying. Whatever be the situation allotted you, be assured I shall ever remain your sincere friend,

"M. GORDON."

"MR. THOMAS CARLYLE, Mainhill, Ecclefechan."

Carlyle's visit or call referred to by Miss Gordon as having been paid "some time ago" most likely took place a little before the middle of April ; for Carlyle attended the Scots Law Lectures at the University until the close of the Session, "left Edinburgh about the twentieth of April," spent ten days with Irving in or near Glasgow, and was home at Mainhill by the 3rd of May. Miss Gordon was prevented from thanking Carlyle personally for his call, owing to the presence of her Aunt or Guardian.

The second or last Letter from Miss Margaret Gordon reads :—

"PALACE CRAIG, June 28th, 1820.

"What a risk did you run in sending your Letter ! I was from home when it arrived, and was much astonished to find it waiting me. I was much pleased to hear your health was improving. *Remove those 'troubles of the soul'* and you *must* be well. Why indulge those miserable racking

thoughts? . . .¹ You ask me to write you often, this, I must repeat would not be doing justice to you—think me not vain—I have adopted the title of Sister and, you must permit me to usurp the privileges of one. You promise never to indulge those ‘vain imaginations’ which have made us both so unhappy. Yet tell me, do they not still require steady restraint? And would not I by acceding to your request, encourage that ‘*weakness*’ it has been my object to remove? Oblige me not to refuse, by asking me to do what is not in my power. Willingly would I advance your happiness, anxious will I be to hear of that happiness, but (think me not severe) from another source my information must come.

“. . . I have only a few moments to devote to this, by the time you receive it, I shall have commenced my wanderings. You are too generous to *wish* me to act against my sense of duty. . . . If you have no cause to speak gently of this friend² remember ’twas a regard for what was considered the interest of her charge that tempted her to look unkindly on you. She really esteems you. For my sake return the kindness. I am to be under a Mother’s care, it is true, for a time; but to the guardianship of this worthy relation I again return. And while in London, I shall equally be under the eye of both, as she determines to accompany [me].³

“And now, my dear friend, a long long adieu. One advice, and as a parting one, consider, value it:—*cultivate the milder dispositions of your heart, subdue the more extravagant visions of the brain*. In time your abilities must be known; among your acquaintances they are already beheld with wonder and delight; by those whose opinion will be valuable, they hereafter will be appreciated. *Genius* will render you *great*. May *virtue* render you *beloved*! Remove the awful distance between you and ordinary men,

¹ Margaret here gives Carlyle some advice—very little needed in his case—to be kind to his parents and brothers and sisters.

² Her Aunt and Guardian, Mrs. Usher.

³ The seal covers some short word here, which might instead of “me” have been “us,” *i.e.* Margaret and one of her Sisters, who, according to some, was also at Kirkcaldy. But at a later stage, Irving mentions his being “introduced” to Margaret’s Sisters in London, which shows that either of them had been in Kirkcaldy during Irving’s time at least.

by kind and gentle manners ; deal mildly with their inferiority, and be convinced they will respect you as much and like you more. Why conceal the real goodness that flows in your heart ?—I have ventured this counsel from an anxiety for your future welfare ; and I would enforce it with all the earnestness of the most sincere friendship. ‘Let your light shine before men,’ and think them not unworthy this trouble. This exercise will prove its own reward. It must be a pleasing thing to live in the affections of others.—Again, Adieu. Pardon the freedom I have used. And when you think of me, be it as of a kind Sister, to whom your happiness will always yield delight, and your griefs sorrow.—Yours with esteem and regard,

“M. GORDON.”

“[*P.S. On the margin of the first page*] I give you not my address because I dare not promise to see you.”

The foregoing Letter is almost certainly the last direct communication between Margaret Gordon and Carlyle ; but, through Edward Irving, Carlyle heard of her occasionally for some eighteen months longer. As Irving’s Letters to Carlyle throw a good deal of new light on this episode, and are interesting in other respects, a little space may be spared for a few extracts from them.

In a Letter to Carlyle, dated, Glasgow, 10th July, 1820, Irving says : “I had verily the most delightful week—nearly two weeks—I ever spent, with what Maiden do you think ? One whose name will thrill you as it does me ; one of whom I am very proud, and with whom I am well nigh in love, ‘*Sed Parcæ adversæ vetant*’ [But the adverse Fates forbid],—Margaret Gordon. With great gallantry she committed herself to my escort through the Highlands by Inverary and Loch Lomond. Mr. Fergusson of Annan was my friend, and Miss Maxton of Alloa hers. But such another scene of heart-content I shall never pass again : the brief time of it lies in my mind like a hallowed sanctuary in a desert, or like a piece of enchanted ground in a wilderness. Truly, it never strikes me to mingle with it the times that went before, or the times which have come after :

it would seem a sort of sacrilege to the Powers which breathed over it such delight. Yet in all this there was no love, but there was the most delightful sympathy in some of the sublimest scenes of Nature, and also in some of the most distressing feelings of the heart. But most of all there was such a hearty wish to give and to receive gratification, which when felt by one so capable of giving it as the first-mentioned lady, who was my chief companion, produced an effect to which I know of no pen able to do justice except that of Boccaccio ; and nothing indeed realised to me the value of some of his sketches of happy companies released from the world amidst bowers and gardens and music and refined sentiment, so much as what I was enabled to feel upon that occasion.¹—Margaret is now gone to London. I saw her to the track boat on Tuesday, with a heavy heart, I can assure you. And she often declared she went back to the gaieties of the City, as a bird to its cage.

“I have been likewise in Edinburgh, and preached for Andrew Thompson . . . and in Fife likewise, where I spent a few happy days ; and now I am on the wing for Dublin. . . .”

The next letter in which Irving mentions Margaret Gordon, is undated, but dateable by internal evidence August or September, 1820. Irving says : “One thing however I inserted in it [a Letter he had written to Margaret], which I hope you will approve, that, having heard your good opinion of each other’s mind and general character, it seemed to me you were likely to profit by a correspondence. Whether my suggestion will please both or either I do not know.”

Then on 21st September, 1820, Irving writes to Carlyle : “I had a letter from our dear friend Margaret Gordon, in answer to that of which I told you something in my last. She is happily delivered into a condition of much thankfulness and affection to her Mother and her Father and her family ; . . . she appears now to have found reason to turn

¹ Irving had probably read a little in Boccaccio’s “Decameron.” The “sentiment” of the stories therein related is too often far enough from “refined.”

her indignation where her affection was formerly ; but I have no explanations, and even this much is given me under a strong charge never more to mention his name, or make allusion to him.¹ . . . I had introduced the subject of a correspondence between you and Margaret, for your mutual entertainment, and she has given what I consider rather an encouraging answer. I shall give it in her own words, and thereby give you another proof of my entire confidence : ‘What a noble character is Mr. Carlyle ! Nature has endowed him with many a rare and valuable gift. . . . I have no hesitation in saying the correspondence of one with a mind so richly gifted would be pleasant and improving to me ; but it would be unfair. I may write [to] Mr. Irving, because no evil can result from the interchange of friendship, he being under an engagement, and I in no danger of falling in love with any one, least of all with my quondam Teacher.’

“. . . See what an omen ! ! My Ink-bottle has overset and lodged its contents in one globular drop upon the very commencement of my quotation [from Miss Gordon’s Letter], and while with cautious hand I endeavoured to pour it back by the top [of the page], it set in one immense stream away through the very heart of my quotation, and but for my extraordinary undauntedness of mind, would have put an eternal stop to all further proceeding in this delicate affair.² . . .”

Again, on 26th September of the same year, Irving’s advice to Carlyle is : “Write to Margaret, and all speed go with you ; but tell her from me, that if she write to you one more Letter than she does to me, I will discard her altogether. I got [rapped] over the fingers so sorely for daring to hint in mine that she might perhaps not have loved so deeply as she thought, that I pray you for your comfort to express no dubitation on that subject. I thought to have written her again by this time ; but this letter has

¹ Her former lover, whose name nowhere appears in any of these Letters.

² Cf. “The (Inkblot), tied down by previous promise cannot, except by best wishes, forward the Herr Teufelsdröckh’s views,” &c.—“Sartor Resartus,” Bk. II., Ch. iv.

taken the precedence. Let the example of poor Allen¹ warn you against venturing too far upon the subject of love. I think it as well you confine yourself to the Platonic."

There is no evidence that Carlyle wrote again to Miss Gordon. It is unlikely that he would re-commence a correspondence under the unpromising state of affairs described by Irving.

Margaret Gordon is mentioned again, and for the last time in Irving's Letters, in one from London, undated but postmarked 30th December, 1821. He writes: "From there [Westminster Abbey] I made all haste to Berkeley Square, and found our friend Margaret Gordon at home. I cannot help fancying that for the first half hour or so she takes advantage of her fashionable style to teach me my clownishness; but afterwards it goes off, and she becomes nearly as we knew her. I had the honour of being introduced to her Sisters, of whom the full-Sister seems a gay fashionable light-hearted girl,—the youngest a great deal of a humourist. They live in style, if I may judge from what I saw. I have not seen the Parents; still I am not satisfied, and yet I know not why. She is good-natured enough. I feel I am not master of the *haut ton* of intercourse. I feel out not a little, which I think she should contrive to prevent. Somehow or other I am indisposed to go back again. She has not Jane Welsh's heart.²—Dear Carlyle, yours always, EDWD. IRVING.

About two years after the date of Irving's last Letter, Margaret Gordon was married to Mr. Alexander Banner-man (afterwards Sir Alexander); he may or may not have been the person referred to in Irving's Letter of 21st September, 1820. Something might be said of Margaret's later history, but it scarcely comes within the scope of this Note. She was married in London, 14th January, 1824;

¹ Probably Dr. Matthew Allen, who spent several months of 1817 at Kirkcaldy, lecturing on Chemistry and Phrenology.

² Carlyle had made Miss Welsh's acquaintance more than half a year before this date, and was now on intimate and very friendly terms with her.

and died childless, at Blackheath (London), in the latter part of 1878. Her husband who was a nephew of Sir Alex. Bannerman, 6th Baronet of Elsick, died in December, 1864, leaving his widow in not the most affluent circumstances.

It has often been said that Margaret Gordon was the Original of "Blumine," the Goddess of Flowers, of *Sartor Resartus*. She is by many supposed to have been Carlyle's First Love, and therefore to have made a deeper and more lasting impression on his heart and mind than any other lady. There is, however, no proof whatever, that Margaret Gordon *was* Carlyle's First Love; it is simply owing to the chance that her letters to Carlyle have been preserved that she has come to be regarded as his First Love. He writes of her incidentally in his Article on Edward Irving in the *Reminiscences* because she had been Irving's pupil and because he had been introduced to her by Irving; but he does not say that he had fallen in love with her; he indicates only that he might easily have done so. He had "some acquaintance" with her, which "might easily have been more," had the conditions been different. Carlyle's Letters to her seem not to have been preserved; but hers show that the intimacy did not go further than the "Dear Sir" stage. At the time of his introduction to Margaret Gordon Carlyle was nearly twenty-four years old; and it would be strange indeed, if a young man, with such a "glowing Fantasy" as his, had not met some "fairest Eve" long before this age was reached. Indeed on returning home from his first day at school (age perhaps three or four), when asked "Who was the nicest lassie?" there, he answered at once, "Jean Johnston,"¹—proving that he had already an eye to female beauty! The "First Love" argument has therefore nothing in it.

Something has already been said (in Note One of this Appendix) intended to show how completely Miss Welsh fills the rôle of Blumine's Original; how she resembles Blumine in character, disposition, attributes of mind and

¹ This lady became the reigning "Beauty of Annan," and Carlyle retained an affectionate interest in her to the last; he corresponded with her, made enquiries after her, and gave her a copy of his works.—See "New Letters of Thomas Carlyle," ii. 6, 214.

temper, and in personal traits ; how she makes her appearance at a time in Carlyle's history which corresponds exactly to Blumine's appearance in Teufelsdröckh's history (that is, just after the study of Law had been renounced) ; how she instantly made a conquest of Carlyle's heart, and soon became his "fair and pure Egeria," his "Goddess of the Fountain," "the ideal beauty of his mind," "the most enchanting creature he had yet seen," and "the sole being he had ever truly loved." Does Margaret Gordon answer to the description of Blumine as closely as Jane Welsh ? Far from it—very far from it. Margaret Gordon appears on the scene at too early a date to be the real Blumine : Carlyle made Margaret's acquaintance in the Autumn of 1818,—a year before he had even commenced the study of Law. This was before his dyspeptic troubles and deep despondency had begun ; he was then a comparatively happy and healthy young man, the very antithesis in these respects of the despairing and woe-begone Teufelsdröckh when going to meet Blumine, or of Carlyle going to make his first call on Miss Welsh.

Truly Margaret Gordon, as Carlyle has described her, bears little or no resemblance to Blumine in disposition, temperament, or personal appearance. She is "softly elegant," "softly grave" ; Blumine is an "imperious Queen of Hearts" with a sufficiency of "naphtha-fire" in her veins. Margaret Gordon is "fair-complexioned" ; Blumine has "dark tresses" and "dark eyes," and is none "of your mere white Heaven-angels of women." Blumine is lively, vivacious, and noted far and near for her "caprices" ; Margaret is "softly grave," and her Letters to Carlyle and Irving indicate that she was a model of constancy.

Again, in what is called the "final scene" in the Romance Chapter of *Sartor*, Teufelsdröckh, like Voltaire, is "made immortal by a kiss," and parts from Blumine in a highly dramatic way ; Margaret's final "farewell" to Carlyle is conveyed to him in her Letter of 28th June, 1820 ; and at their last personal interview, some time before, her Guardian was present, and there could have been no dramatic parting, and certainly, no immortalising kiss !

The "Rue St. Thomas de l'Enfer," or Leith Walk incident, took place in the Summer of 1822,—more than two years after Carlyle's last call on Margaret Gordon. Teufelsdröckh's despondency just prior to this incident, is attributed to his "sudden bereavement in this matter of the Flower-goddess"; now, if Margaret Gordon was the Flower-goddess, the loss of her must have taken a long time to produce its effect! Since Carlyle has described himself "happy as a lark in May," "full of joy," &c., in the intervening year (1821), it seems much more likely, to say the least of it, that his "Lovers'-quarrel" with Miss Welsh, which occurred shortly before the "incident," was the cause of his despondency rather than the tardy recollection of a forgotten disappointment which he had met with years before. The "Lovers'-quarrel" with Miss Welsh clearly affected Carlyle deeply: for a long time after it he wrote to her as a friend, not as a lover; and he did not repeat his visit to Haddington for more than a year subsequent to it, and then only on the urgent invitation of both Mrs. and Miss Welsh. It was while suffering the smart of this misunderstanding with Miss Welsh that the Leith Walk incident occurred.

Blumine is Carlyle's portraiture of a real maiden whom he had seen and known; not a creature of his imagination. There are, in fact, no imaginary characters in Carlyle's works (those published by himself); his heroes and heroines are all realities, flesh-and-blood men and women, whom he has portrayed with a master's hand and with all possible fidelity to their originals as he had come to know them. In his *Journal*, under date 22nd July, 1832 (after *Sartor* had been completed), he writes: "As yet I have never risen into the region of Creation: am I approaching it?"

Furthermore, Blumine seems to be the portrait of one separate and distinct individual, not an artificial combination of characteristics selected from various models. Carlyle discredited and ridiculed the notion that "The artist *collects* beauties and *combines* them; a bright eye from this, a fair round chin from that; a taper form from the other, and so makes up his Venus." In that way, he believed, you might make a bed-quilt, a hearthrug, a pot of Scotch broth, a

plum-pudding, but not a work of art, a thing that is to *live* and give life. Blumine has already lived some years, and still grows in favour: it will be long before she ceases to live, and interest, instruct and delight youths and maidens, and even their elders.

The fair maiden who was the Original of Blumine,—the individual who sat for her portrait,—must have been very vividly present to Carlyle's mind and heart, when he was portraying the Rose-goddess in 1831. It is difficult to believe that Carlyle, living at Craigenputtock, mostly alone with his young Wife, on terms of mutual love, entire trust, and in perfect domestic felicity, would have passed by his "own Egeria," "the ideal beauty of his mind," "the sole being he had ever truly loved," and have promoted another lady (with whom he had once had "some acquaintance," and who had ceased to "hang in his fancy," even "on the usual romantic terms," some ten years before) to the high distinction and honour of being the heroine of *Sartor Resartus*. And what would the young Wife have thought and said, on hearing her Husband confess, as Carlyle does in *Sartor*, that he had "frantically" loved another than herself, and could "love but *once*"? Who knows? But every one knows that celebrating the charms and singing the praises of any other lady, however eloquently done, would not have won from Mrs. Carlyle, the "First Patroness of this Book, against the whole world once," the emphatic laudation, "It is a work of genius, Dear."

Was Blumine's "real name Flora, then?" Echo answers with no uncertain sound, "Yes, Flora, the Flower of Haddington Jane Baillie Welsh!"

NOTE THREE

EDWARD IRVING AND JANE WELSH

In 1811 when Edward Irving was Schoolmaster in Haddington, he was employed by Dr. Welsh to give private lessons to his little Daughter Jeannie, then aged

ten. At that time Irving was nineteen,—nearly twice his Pupil's age.

Irving by all accounts, was then a clever, dashing, and rather handsome youth; and the sprightly, ambitious and pretty little Jeannie must have found much to admire in him. Indeed, she did admire him, and not only that,—she loved him “passionately,” according to her own confession. This, however, was not the first time she had fallen in love; for she has told us that her First-love occurred a year or more before this date, when she was only nine years of age. This really First-love, if not by herself called “passionate,” was deep, overpowering, transcendent and never to be forgotten. But alas! her love was not returned: its object, Master Scholey, the Artillery Boy, did not respond; his regiment moved on to other quarters, and little Jeannie was left lamenting.¹

Whether Irving responded or not will appear, perhaps, in the sequel. It is to be hoped he did not. For he too “moved on,”—to the Mastership of a School at Kirkcaldy, in the summer of 1812. He had been here only a few months when he fell in love with the Minister's Daughter, Miss Isabella Martin; and in due course “asked her Father,” was accepted, and the lovers became openly and formally engaged.

Jeannie, on the other hand, fell in love with George Rennie; and he, as she says herself, became her *fiancé*. This was Miss Welsh's most serious love-affair down to the time of her first meeting with Carlyle. But in the Spring of 1822, George went abroad to study Art, being not heir but only cadet of Phantassie, and he and Miss Welsh did not meet again until long years afterwards. Carlyle says in his *Reminiscences*: “The most serious-looking of these [love] affairs was that of George Rennie.” Miss Welsh calls George a “faithless lover”; but in time she completely forgave him, and nursed and watched over him during his last illness.²

As to Edward Irving and Miss Welsh, they did not meet

¹ See “The simple Story of my own First-love,” in “New Letters and Memorials,” ii. 48-57.

² “Reminiscences,” i. 70.

again until after Irving had left Kirkcaldy, which he did towards the end of November, 1818. Mrs. Oliphant tells a story of their "meeting once more" at some friend's house in Edinburgh, when Irving "found her a beautiful and vivacious girl, with an affectionate recollection of her old master," but he was nevertheless piqued at hearing her speak in terms of praise of some other gentleman, and then apologised, &c.¹ The exact date of this meeting is not given, nor the name of the favourite gentleman. It happened, however, some time early in 1819, when Irving, like Carlyle, was living in Edinburgh, attending classes at the College, and looking about for a career other than pedagogy; and it is just possible that the gentleman who was the subject of Miss Welsh's praise was George Rennie.

The next meeting between Irving and Miss Welsh, of which there is any record, was the memorable one when Irving took Carlyle out to Haddington to introduce him to Miss Welsh, in the end of May, 1821. Irving, who was by this time Assistant to Dr. Chalmers in Glasgow,² was in Edinburgh for the nonce attending the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, which is held annually in the latter half of May. It is quite likely that Carlyle and Irving attended the Assembly together on at least one occasion this year; and it is possible that Mrs. Welsh and her Daughter (who were in the habit of coming in to Town during the Assembly Meetings to hear the Theological great guns) were also present; and even that Irving pointed them out to Carlyle as people whom he knew. (In *Sartor* Carlyle speaks of Teufelsdröckh's having seen Blumine in public places before he had been introduced to her. And in the *Reminiscences*, ii. 48, speaking of the Tour with Irving, &c., in 1817, he says: "*Her* [Jane Welsh], probably, at that time I had still never seen.") However that may be, Irving, whether of his own volition or at Carlyle's expressed wish, had asked and obtained permission to bring him out to call on the Welshes.

So the two young men set off from Edinburgh on "a

¹ "Life of Edward Irving," i. 85 (2nd Edition).

² Irving began duty there in September, 1819.

sunny summer afternoon," to walk to Haddington, fully sixteen miles. They took up their quarters in the George Inn, and called on Mrs. Welsh, more than once during their stay "of three or four days" in Haddington. The date of this important meeting is difficult to fix with absolute accuracy: but Carlyle's Letters show that he and Irving returned from Haddington on "Thursday the 31st of May." In the *Reminiscences* he also says that Irving was to preach in the Town on this occasion. Therefore the date may with at least a near approach to certainty be assumed to be Saturday, 26th May, 1821.

It is clear from what Carlyle says in his *Reminiscences* that the too much-made-of Love affair between Irving and Miss Welsh was "off" for good before May, 1821. "I think," says Carlyle, "there had been before this, on Irving's own part some movements of negotiation over to Kirkcaldy for release there," that is from his engagement to Miss Martin. Then Carlyle adds: "He [Irving] seemed to be quite composed upon the matter by this time."¹ Carlyle relates that after their first call on the Welshes, and after having retired to their respective beds in a room of the George Inn, Irving said jocosely to him: "What would you take to marry Miss Augusta, now?" Carlyle answered, "Not for an entire and perfect chrysolite the size of this terraqueous Globe!" "And what would you take to marry Miss Jeannie, think you?" "Hah," answered Carlyle, "I should not be so hard to deal with there I should imagine." Then Carlyle continues: "Upon which another bit of laugh from Irving; and we went composedly to sleep. I was supremely dyspeptic and out of health, during those three or four days; but they were the beginning of a new life to me."²

Carlyle and Irving were therefore never "rivals" for Miss Welsh's hand. They were the best and closest of friends; and had "no secrets from one another." Carlyle says, writing of Irving in 1866: "From the first we honestly liked one another, and grew intimate; nor was there ever, while we both lived, any cloud or grudge

¹ "Reminiscences," ii. 86.

² *Ibid.*, ii. 87.

between us, or an interruption of our feelings for a day or hour.”¹

As Carlyle and Irving were both frank and open and on the kindest terms with each other, it is perfectly clear that they both knew on what footing they respectively stood in regard to Miss Welsh; and had Irving sought her hand or interfered in any way to the prejudice of Carlyle *after* he had introduced him to Miss Welsh, it could hardly have failed to produce both a “cloud” and a “grudge” between the two young men.

The evidence (such as it is) of Irving’s inconstancy to his long-affianced bride rests partly on Miss Welsh’s word, and partly on what interpretation ought to be given to certain rather equivocal sentences, or fractions of sentences, which remain on the back of a Sonnet addressed by Irving to Miss Welsh. Had the Sonnet been dated it would either have effectively cleared Irving’s good name from even the suspicion of anything like disloyalty to his friend Carlyle, or else it would have proved him guilty. For this reason it is worth a little effort to try to fix the date of the Sonnet; which is also clearly that of Irving’s alleged attempt at release from Miss Martin.

Irving’s Sonnet is entitled “To a Lock of my Lady’s Hair, which reached me through hairbreadth ’scapes.” Five or six lines of it read thus:—

“Thy journey as a voyage o’er the Main
Hath been advent’rous; thou wert cast away
’Mongst vulgar hinds; and there unknown hadst lain,
But that the Queen of Love who watched thy way
Did pity me and safely thee convey
Here to my bosom,” &c. &c.

The “Lock” in question had evidently been sent to Irving (most likely in a Letter), and as the title as well as the above cited lines show, there had been delay and risk run before the Lock had reached Irving’s hands. Had Irving been at home—any fixed home—it is improbable that there would have been any unusual risk or delay in the delivery. But in 1819, and again in 1820, Irving was holidaying and touring from place to place in Ireland, and

¹ “Reminiscences,” ii. 27.

had, it is said, much trouble in getting hold of his Letters. He was never out of Great Britain except on these two occasions. Therefore it is at least highly probable that the date of the Sonnet is either 1819 or 1820. Either date would perfectly agree with Carlyle's statement that Irving "seemed to be quite composed upon the matter by this time," May, 1821.

As to the Sonnet itself, it was written on a page of the Letter sent in acknowledgment of the Lock of hair. Miss Welsh had cut out the Sonnet, and destroyed the rest of the Letter; but on the back of the piece of paper thus preserved there remain some lines of the Letter. These are incomplete, being cut away at each end (the lines of the Sonnet being shorter than those of the Letter). Two of these broken lines read as follow :—

"I have resolved neither to see Isabella nor her father before I"

"cannot brook the sight of either until this be explained and until "

These have been understood to imply that Irving had deserted, or was about to desert, his *fiancée* Miss Martin. This is not an unreasonable surmise; and yet it may not be the correct one. These lines may be taken to imply nothing more than a "Lovers'-quarrel," arising out of some misunderstanding. Such quarrels often occur in even the best-conducted courtships; but it is an old and true adage that "The quarrels of lovers but renew their love." It seems to have been so in Irving's case; the explanation which he required was doubtless received, and all went smoothly afterwards.

Irving, who was certainly not the most discreet of Letter-writers at any time, appears in this Sonnet-Letter to have taken his old friend and pupil, Miss Welsh, into his confidence regarding the Lovers'-quarrel, and in the smart of the moment, to have complained to her of Isabella and her Father.¹ What counsel Miss Welsh gave him in her

¹ It may well be that the Rev. Mr. Martin had written to Irving reminding him that he had now been engaged to Miss Martin for seven or eight years, that he was now in a position to marry, that it was full time he should "declare his intentions," &c., and that this led to the temporary misunderstanding.

reply can never now be known : for her Letters to Irving have not been preserved. She may have given him good and wise advice ; recommended him to be patient and forgiving ; and to remain true to his *fiancée*. If she did this, it would explain what she meant in telling Carlyle, when she was urged into the confessional by Mrs. Montagu many years afterwards, that she “had persuaded” Irving “to marry” Miss Martin “and preserve his honour from reproach.”

That Irving ever regretted or had the slightest cause to regret his engagement and ultimate marriage with Miss Martin, is entirely without proof. Mrs. Oliphant gives no hint of it ; she describes Irving and his “dear Isabella” as being at all times perfectly happy and contented with each other, and as going along life’s journey, loving, trusting and esteeming each other to the very end. And Mrs. Oliphant was a conscientious, trustworthy Biographer, well-qualified to know the truth, and disposed to tell it without admixture of sensational romance. Here is what she says of Mrs. Irving’s character and her husband’s confidence in it : “She stood by her husband bravely through every vicissitude of life ; was so thorough a companion to him, that he confided to her in detail, all the thoughts which occupied him, as will be seen in after letters ; received his entire trust and confidence, piously laid him in his grave, brought up his children, and lived for half of her life a widow indeed, in the exercise of all womanly and Christian virtues.”¹ She was withal a “Daughter of the Manse” ; of a religious nature ; well-fitted by education, by precept and example, for discharging the manifold and often trying duties of a Clergyman’s Wife.

Miss Welsh’s confession that she had “*once* loved Irving passionately” requires to be taken with some degree of caution, and especially to be considered in connection with her other statements about her “lovers.” In her sportive, teasing, exaggerative language on this subject, their number was legion : the Artillery Boy, George Rennie, the Farmer’s Son at Closeburn, the Steamboat Colonel, the Artist Benjamin B., Dr. Fyffe, the Boy Dugald G., the stammer-

¹ “Life of Edward Irving,” i. 178.

ing Englishman, her Second Cousin at Leeds, Captain James Baillie the Lancer. All these and many more are marshalled as "lovers,"—some of them being ardently loved in return—for a while ; but in the end they all proved objectionable and were discarded, or themselves escaped.

Irving, too, on further acquaintance, proved unsatisfactory. Miss Welsh's love for him was a mere girlish fancy, of which she was afterwards the reverse of proud : "What an idiot I was ever to think that man so estimable ! But I am done with his Preachership now and forever," she wrote to Carlyle in May, 1824. And even at the time when Irving is said to have been "a constant visitor at Haddington," his influence over Miss Welsh and her appreciation of him evidently amounted to very little. For in her Letter of 11th November, 1822, she tells Carlyle : "When you saw me for the first time [May, 1821] I was wretched beyond description : grief at the loss of the only being [her Father] I ever loved with my whole soul had weakened my body and mind ; distraction of various kinds had relaxed my habits of industry ; I had no counsellor that could direct me, no friend that understood me ; the pole-star of my life was lost, and the world looked a dreary blank. Without plan, hope or aim I had lived two years when my good Angel sent you hither."¹

If Edward Irving was a constant visitor during these two years (1819-1821), it must be allowed he did not count for much in Miss Welsh's estimation. He is not even enumerated in Miss Welsh's list of "lovers," which is given with minute detail in her Letter to Miss Eliza Stodart, of date "end of 1821 or beginning of 1822."² As was to be expected, George Rennie's name heads the list ; then follow "James Aitken," "Robert MacTurk," "James Baird," "Robby Angus." The Letter concludes with the following reference to George Rennie, which shows that he had been, and perhaps still was, the chief object of her affection in those years : "Oh ! wretch ! I wish I could hate him, but I cannot ; I despise him, but I do not hate him ; and when Friday comes, I always think how neatly

¹ See *ante*, Letter No. 30.

² "Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle," pp. 29-36.

I used to be dressed, and sometimes I give my hair an additional brush and put on a clean frill, just from habit. Oh ! the Devil take him ! he has wasted all the affections of my poor heart, and now there is not the vestige of a flirt about me." This seems to prove that Irving was nothing more to Miss Welsh during those years than an ordinary friend or acquaintance. He went to London in December, 1821, and she saw very little of him after that. He is mentioned for the first time in the *Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle*, in one dated 3rd of March, 1822, and is there the object of a rather questionable compliment, thus : "Mr. Irving is making a horrible noise in London, where he has got a Church. He tells me in his last,¹ that his head is quite turned with the admiration he has received, and I quite believe him."

All this corroborates and confirms Carlyle's statement, above quoted, that "The most serious-looking of these affairs was that of George Rennie."

Beyond Miss Welsh's confession that she had "once loved" Irving "passionately," there is little or nothing to show that she cared much for him or esteemed him highly, but much, very much, of a quite opposite character, as those who have read her Letters to Carlyle well know. It may be noted that she underlines the word "once," by which she probably means Carlyle to understand that her love for Irving was either of short duration or that it existed a very long time ago. When she arrived at the years of discretion her opinion of Irving had undergone a considerable change ; and it is all too likely that a union for life with him would have proved most unfortunate for both of them. There could scarcely have been found in the whole world two people more diverse in character, temperament, disposition, aim in life, interests, pursuits, and, in a word, all that goes to make what is called a "suitable match," than Edward Irving and Jane Welsh. Mrs. Montagu, who knew them both, and was a keen observer and good judge of character,

¹ Dated 9th February, 1822, and printed in full in "Life of Edward Irving," i. 134-6. The Letter was written from his lodgings in Glasgow ; he did not write at all to Miss Welsh during the time of his first visit to London.

an experienced matron with a plentiful supply of worldly wisdom, has put it on record that she thought them eminently unsuited to each other. In 1825, while labouring under the absurd mistake that Miss Welsh was then still pining for Irving, Mrs. Montagu wrote to Carlyle (30th May): "If Miss Welsh were to pass one week with me, she might be satisfied that to be Irving's Wife, would (to a spirit of her tone) be entire and unmixed misery: they are not the least fitted to each other." To which it may be added, without fear of contradiction, that Miss Welsh was not the least fitted for being a Clergyman's Wife.

The romantic story of Irving and Miss Welsh being disappointed, broken-hearted, thwarted lovers, is not reconcilable with fact, and can be believed only by those who are unacquainted with the true story of the affair. Had George Rennie's name been substituted for Irving's, a far more credible story might have been made of it: for Mrs. Carlyle has herself admitted that George Rennie was once actually her *fiancé*; ¹ and her early Letters to Miss Stodart clearly prove that he was her most highly favoured lover until about the time of Carlyle's appearance on the scene. But with Rennie for hero in place of Irving the romance would have lost most of its sensational element; for Rennie never became celebrated like Irving, nor was he Carlyle's personal friend, and so the interest and piquancy of the situation would have been sacrificed for the sake of truth.

The Irving-Welsh romance, as related by Carlyle's Biographer, is the reverse of creditable to either Irving or Miss Welsh. It would have been unpardonable in Irving to forsake Miss Martin, to whom he had been engaged for seven or eight years, at the least, for no fault of hers, but just because he had found another young lady who he thought would suit him better! A formal engagement, especially one of such long duration, well-known all along to the friends and acquaintances of the contracting parties, is scarcely less sacred than a marriage. Happily for Irving's good name, there is no positive proof,

¹ "New Letters and Memorials," ii. 97.

no probability even, that he seriously attempted to break his engagement ; at the worst, it is only doubtful, and Irving ought in fairness to have the benefit of the doubt.

The only basis the story has is to be found in Irving's florid, exuberant and extravagant Letters to Miss Welsh, and her confession to Carlyle that she had once loved Irving passionately. But Miss Welsh had so many lovers ! and had raised the cry of Wolf so often when there was really not the least sign of danger, that one may be excused for doubting the reality of the danger in this particular case. She loved the Artillery Boy, Master Scholey, with a passion such as words cannot express ; and she gave to the Boy's Mother her most precious possession in the hope of obtaining, not the Boy himself, but only the loan of his Portrait ! Then George Rennie was her *fiancé* ; and for the "Gallant Artist, Benjamin B.," she tells both Eliza Stodart and Carlyle that, "to have met him eye to eye and soul to soul, I would have swam across the river [Nith] at the risk of being dosed with water-gruel for a month to come." And so with a whole host of other "lovers."

Then as to Irving's love for Miss Welsh, there is no trustworthy evidence that it was ever real and deep. His Letters to her are so extravagant and high-flown, that no dependence can be safely placed on them as expressions of his real feelings. From his Letters to Carlyle about Margaret Gordon, one would judge that he loved *her* far better than Miss Welsh. For, after parting from Margaret Gordon, he wrote to Carlyle (10th of July, 1820) : "With great gallantry she [Margaret] committed herself to my escort through the Highlands . . . such another scene of heart-content I shall never pass again : the brief time of it lies in my mind like a hallowed sanctuary in a desert, or like a piece of enchanted ground in a wilderness. Truly, it never strikes me to mingle with it the times which went before, or the times which have come after : it would seem a sort of sacrilege to the Powers which breathed over it such delight." Evidently Irving forgot all about Miss Welsh when he was in the presence of Miss Gordon. The fact is that Irving made it his boast *To love everybody*. In presenting a copy of his first Book, he clearly states in

the inscription that he loves Mrs. Welsh "no less" than he loves Miss Welsh! In his Letters he writes with exuberant gratitude of what he owes to Mrs. Welsh's kindness and hospitality; Mrs. Martin he declares to be "her to whom, of matrons, I owe the most after her who gave me birth"; and of Mrs. Martin's home he writes: "The greater part of that which is soothing and agreeable in the experiences of my last six years, is associated with your hospitable house and delightful family."¹ If Irving had the grace to love Miss Welsh when he was in her company, it would appear he had also the "talent of forgetting" nearly all about her when she was absent from his sight. During all the time of his first visit to London, which lasted from the beginning of December, 1821, till near the end of January following, he never wrote her a single line; and the few Letters he wrote to her after this, are filled with apologies for not writing to her.

If Irving at an earlier date than May, 1821, made love to Miss Welsh with a view to marriage, of which there is no proof, it is made perfectly clear by his Letters, that all efforts in this direction were entirely abandoned from and after the time when he introduced Carlyle to her. His Letters after this are simply those of a friend,—a friend of the family,—her old Tutor, her constant spiritual adviser. There is not a word of "love-making" in any one of them.

For the sake of truth, and in justice to Irving's good name, and also to Miss Welsh's, it may be excusable to cite a few passages from his Letters to her, since Carlyle's Biographer has used them with great freedom. We cite from the same collection that Mr. Froude used; but we cite correctly, and give the proper dates. No commentary is necessary; it can easily be supplied by any intelligent reader. The subject, though not particularly interesting in itself, is nevertheless of some importance to students of Carlyle's life, because this Irving-Welsh romance has served to render more credible Mr. Froude's contention that Carlyle and Miss Welsh never truly loved each other: the affections of the one were wasted on Margaret Gordon; those of the other on Edward Irving!

¹ "Life of Edward Irving," i. 89.

The earliest of these Letters is one written from his lodgings in Glasgow, soon after he and Carlyle had made their first call together on Mrs. Welsh at Haddington. It runs as follows :—

“34, KENT STREET, GLASGOW, 5th June, 1821.

“MY DEAR JANE,—. . . I may speak out the sense I feel of your Mother’s treatment of my Friend and myself; it was so kind and so far from the restraints and affectations of ordinary intercourse. I wish both of us were of that rank and consideration in the world, which could make our acquaintance as creditable before the world as we have found without any of these vulgar recommendations it was welcome in your eyes. But the time perhaps is coming in the good dispensations of Providence when we shall get an establishment among the good comfortable conditions as well as the vain and empty opinions of men. Meanwhile I daresay you must be content with the old commonplace returns of gratitude for the present and protestations for the future. . . . You see I will be speaking with the large licence of a Tutor, or with the grave ceremony of a Clerical Gallant. The truth is I am not skilled, as I have not been accustomed, to read myself to a lady; and so you see I blunder now upon the one side and now upon the other. And I know your eye is as quick to discern, as your heart is set to abhor the poor wight who has recourse to sentiment, the only recourse which he has in cases of such exceeding nicety.

“This [new] page, my accomplished pupil, shall be devoted to a more serious strain. . . . I pray you, my dear friend, not to put religion away from you with that unconcern or slight consideration which the multitude do. . . . Study it with half the intensity you have studied Literature, practise it with half the diligence, and if there flow not in upon your spirit a gust of new nature, and come not forth an efflorescence of new fruitfulness, then do I consent that you shall give it up forever. . . .

“My warmest affection I offer to your Mother, and my services to the last of my ability. Again I say, if I were a man of might, I would feel more liberty in offering them;

but as I am, with my Maker's natural gifts and with the desire to possess my Redeemer's graces, I offer myself, to you both, as a most esteeming friend most zealous to make up by counsel and otherwise that noble-minded Guardian whom it hath pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from you. With the tear of memory in my eye and with the glow of ancient affection in my heart, I am, my dear Jane, Your affectionate friend and instructor,

“EDWD. IRVING.”

The next Letter is to Carlyle and is dated from Glasgow, 12th June, 1821,—twelve days after the visit to Haddington had ended :—

“MY DEAR CARLYLE,—I think I never left Edinburgh with more sadness than when I parted with you in Princes Street.” (*Here follows an account of the Coach-Journey, with a description of his fellow-passengers.*) “She [a lady passenger] had the most delightful thing of a Port-folio containing all sorts of extracts in Poetry, of a sentimental and erotic cast, some small ware from the inventive heads of conundrum-makers, and certain engravings from my Lord Byron's Works,” &c., &c. “By the way, between ourselves, there is too much of that furniture about the elegant drawing-room of Jane Welsh, our Friend. I could like to see her surrounded by a more sober set of companions than Rousseau your friend and Byron and such like; they will never make different characters than they were themselves, so deeply are they the prototypes of their own conceptions of human characters. And I don't think it will much mend the matter when you get her introduced to Von Schiller and Von Goethe, and your other nobles of the German Literature. And I fear Jane has already dipped too deep into that spring already [*sic*]. So that unless some more solid food be afforded, I fear she will escape altogether out of the region of my sympathies and the sympathies of honest home-bred men. In these feelings I know you will join me; and in giving to her character and speculation a useful and elegant turn, I know you will

aid me as you have opportunity.¹ . . . I have written to Jane Welsh, but have not heard from her again."

There is nothing more about Miss Welsh in the foregoing Letter. Irving's disapproval of the elegant trifles he had noticed in her drawing-room, and of the books she was reading (Rousseau, Byron, &c.), is interesting coming from him, who "had been a constant visitor at Haddington." For it suggests that in the past he had either not presumed to direct her reading or attempt to refine her taste with any view to moulding her character into accordance with his ideal, or that she had paid but little regard to his instructions. In either case his influence over her had not been great.

In the next Letter to Miss Welsh, dated "Glasgow, 9th July, 1821," Irving acknowledges receipt of some "composition" by her, which he praises very highly. "It is wonderfully clear of affectation; and though it might be rendered richer by the study of some of our more ancient models (Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, Milton, &c.), it would not gain either in accuracy or propriety." He confesses, however, that: "In criticism I have no gift; . . . to me it were positively a greater treat to find the tenderness of Christian sentiment and the workings of Christian affection than to see the refinement of Collier or the depth of [De] Staël. My soul is divorcing itself from the world and its tastes, and longing to be wedded to purity and wisdom and effulgence of love which are in God, and which are revealed in Christ. It is not that I despise human ornaments, whereof never having had many, I should have no credit in despising them. I see them to be the purest extract of terrestrial existences, the poetry of what is seen; but I see likewise that the most accomplished may be the most envious and evil-doing and unhappy. And therefore I long

¹ From "there is too much of that furniture" to "opportunity" is printed in Froude's "Life of Carlyle," i. 135; but the date of the Letter is omitted, and the extract is placed later in point of time than another Letter which Mr. Froude correctly dates "24th July, 1821"! The inference naturally drawn from this, by several writers, was that Carlyle had recommended to Miss Welsh such authors as Rousseau, Byron, &c. At a later period Mr. Froude asserted that Carlyle had undermined Miss Welsh's religious belief.

for something which, while it graces and becomes my spirit, shall bless it with liberality and love, and set it at rest from quaking fears and restless dispeace. This is my wish, my dear pupil, for myself and for those whom I love."

"... If ever I be blessed with a daughter of your accomplishments, and have her placed at a distance, in a guileful and heartless world, and if she were weeping the woe of some not distant calamity, I think my feeling towards that daughter were akin to this my feeling towards you."

The Letter concludes thus: "Present to your mother my kind love, and my sense of the obligation in being permitted to fill up this solemn hour¹ in writing to her daughter,—an obligation which I would not have had otherwise than by her full permission, and which, till I am forbidden, I shall not fail often and often to come under.—I am, my dear Jane, Your affect. instructor and friend,

"EDWD. IRVING."

The Postscript is perhaps the most interesting part of the missive. It reads: "I had last night a Letter from Carlyle, about a German Grammar, requesting me to send mine, as one he ordered for you has not come to hand. This I think exceeding preposterous, considering the distance, and that my Grammar is one of the nudest commonest sort. He encourages you to wade onward through the entanglements which grow along the edge that you may swim together down the Ethereal stream of German Poetry,—against the Winter. I am happy on account of the interest he conceives in your progress in study. He is very generous and his spirit has been too long land-locked by adverse currents, so that when an opportunity occurs of his getting out into the ocean of feeling where he was made to move, it gives me pleasure on his own account. E. I."

The foregoing Letter cannot have given Miss Welsh unmixed pleasure; the evident deprecation of secular learning and the commendation of religious instruction

¹ Of midnight.

must have come like a cold douche over her in her present ardent pursuit of literary distinction. Religion was never a favourite study with her ; and at this time all her aspirations were towards literature. Accordingly a long break in the correspondence seems to have followed this Letter. There is no other from Irving to Miss Welsh until February, 1822 ; and in the interval he had been in London preaching his "trial" sermons, having gone thither in December and come back towards the end of January.

As to the German Grammar, Irving wrote to Carlyle, on 24th July, 1821 : "I did not follow your injunctions of transmitting to our fair acquaintance my German Grammar and Dictionary,—her own being as much to her purpose ; but I did not fail to inform her of the cause of your failure, and to instruct her to make all progress through the preliminaries to a sure and easy perusal of the German Poets." In writing this, Irving must have forgotten what he had written to Miss Welsh on the 9th of the same month. He gave her no encouragement, or less than none, to make progress in German.

The next Letter to Miss Welsh is dated, "34 Kent Street, Glasgow, 9th February, 1822." It is printed in full in Mrs. Oliphant's *Life of Edward Irving*.¹ A few sentences run thus : "Do excuse me, I pray you, by the memory of our old acquaintance, and anything else which it is pleasant to remember, for my neglect to you in London. . . . Forget it and forgive it ; and let us be established in our former correspondence as if no such sin against it had ever taken place. I could say some things on my own behalf ; but till you go to London, which I hope will not be till I am there to be a brother to you, you could not at all sympathise with them.

"And know now, though late, that my head is almost turned with the approbation I received—certainly my head is turned ; for from being a poor desolate creature, melancholy of success, yet steel against misfortune, I have become

¹ Mrs. Oliphant, it is important to remember, was on close terms of intimacy with Mrs. Carlyle. The "Life of Edward Irving" shows that its author had read Irving's Letters to Miss Welsh, and had obtained permission to publish the one mentioned above.

all at once full of hope and activity. My hours of study have doubled themselves—my intellect, long unused to expand itself, is now awakening again. . . .

“But these things [his kind reception, presents, &c.], my dear Jane, delight me not, save as vouchsafements of my Maker’s bounty, the greater because the more undeserved. Were I established in the love and obedience of Him, I should rise toweringly aloft into the regions of a very noble and sublime character, and so would my highly-gifted pupil, to retain whose friendship shall be a consolation to my life : to have her fellowship in divine ambitions would make her my dear companion through eternity.

“To your affectionate mother, whose indulgence gives me this pleasant communication with her daughter, I have to express my attachment in every letter. May you live worthy of each other, mutual stays through life, doubly endeared, because alone together ; and therefore doubly dutiful to Him who is the husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless. I have sent this under cover to my friend T. C[arlyle], not knowing well where you are at present. . . . I hope to be in Edinburgh soon, where I will not be without seeing you.—I am, my dear pupil, your affectionate friend,

“EDWARD IRVING.”

Immediately following this Letter is the one printed (in part) in Froude’s *Life of Carlyle*, i. 154-6, undated except as to the day of the week, but written from Carlyle’s Lodgings, 3, Moray Street, Leith Walk. As Carlyle moved into these Lodgings at the end of 1821, and as Irving returned from London in the last days of January, 1822, and set out again for London on 8th July, 1822, the Letter must have been written between these two latter dates. Some sentences omitted from Mr. Froude’s version of the Letter give a clue to its more exact date. Here is the Letter in full :—

“3, MORAY STREET, LEITH WALK,

“Wednesday.

“MY WELL-BELOVED FRIEND AND PUPIL,—When I think of you my mind is overspread with the most affectionate

and tender regard which I neither know how to name nor how to describe. One thing I know, it would long ago have taken the form of the most devoted attachment, but for one intervening circumstance, and have shewed itself and pleaded itself before your heart by a thousand actions from which I must now restrain myself. Heaven grant me its grace to restrain myself, and forgetting my own enjoyment, may I be enabled to combine unto your single self all that duty and plighted faith leave at my disposal. When I am in your company my whole soul would rush to serve you, and my tongue trembles to speak my heart's fulness—but I am enabled to forbear, and have to find other avenues than the natural ones for the overflowing of an affection which would hardly have been able to confine itself within the avenues of nature if they had all been opened.

“But I feel within me the power to prevail and at once to satisfy duty to another and affection to you. I stand, truly, upon ground which seems to shake and give way beneath me, but my help is in heaven.

“Bear with this much, my early charge and my present friend, from one who lives to help and defend you, who would die rather than wrong you or see you wronged. Say that I shall speak no more of the painful struggle I am undergoing, and I shall be silent—if you allow me to speak then I shall reveal to you the features of a virtuous contention to be crowned, I pray and trust, with a Christian triumph.

“It is very extraordinary that this weak nature of mine cannot [*sic*] bear two affections both of so intense a kind; and yet I feel it can. It shall feed the one with faith and duty, and chaste affection, the other with paternal, fraternal and friendly love no less pure no less assiduous no less constant. In return seeking nothing but permission and indulgence.

“I was little comforted by Rousseau's letters though holding out a most admirable moral; but much, much comforted and confirmed, by the few words which your noble heart dictated the moment before I left you. Oh persevere, my admirable pupil, in the noble admirations

you have taken up. Let affectionateness and manly firmness be the qualities to which you yield your love, and your life shall be honourable; advance your admirations somewhat higher and it shall be everlastingly happy.

"Oh do not forbid me from rising in my communications with one so capable of the loftiest conceptions, forbid me not to draw you upwards to the love and study of your Creator which is the beginning of wisdom. I have sent you Erskine's book which though nothing equal to the subject is well worth your study.—I have returned Rousseau.—Carlyle is not so aggrieved as I could have figured. Such a parting from you would have gone far to kill me. But this will never happen. Mr. Graham has met with an accident, having been fairly lifted by the wind from his feet and dashed through a window; but he is recovering.

"My most affectionate regards to your mother. The time is coming when I shall have an opportunity to testify my sense of attentions from such a mother and such a daughter in a way becoming their worth and station. Count forever, my dear Jane, upon the last efforts to minister to your happiness present and everlasting.

From your faithful friend and servant,

"EDWD. IRVING."

The reference to Mr. Graham in the foregoing Letter serves to fix its date; for, in a postscript to Letter No. 11, *ante*, Carlyle writing on the 27th of February, 1822, tells Miss Welsh: "Irving and Graham are coming from Glasgow to-night to stay with me for a week." The 27th was Wednesday: Irving dates his Letter "Wednesday," which must therefore have been the 6th of March, or, if he staid in Edinburgh more than a week, which is unlikely as he was then busy preparing for his ordination, it might have been the 13th of March. That is near enough for our present purpose.

During his visit to Carlyle, Irving had gone one day to call on Miss Welsh and her Mother; and after his return to Carlyle's lodgings, he wrote to Miss Welsh the above rather extraordinary Letter. Two conclusions may be drawn from it: (1), Irving is not a suitor for Miss Welsh's

hand. His "weak nature will feed" her "with paternal, fraternal and friendly love," "in return seeking nothing but permission and indulgence." (2), He had never been her avowed lover: "One thing I know, it [his regard] would long ago have taken the form of the most devoted attachment, but for one intervening circumstance." The intervening circumstance was his engagement to Miss Martin, which took place in 1812.

There is evidence independently of this Letter to show that Irving had not been very cordially received at Haddington on the occasion of this call. Miss Welsh was at the time in bad humour with him because of his long and inexcusable neglect in writing to her; and above all, because she was at this juncture undergoing the painful experience of a final parting from her *fiancé*, George Rennie. (See Letter viii., 3rd March, 1822, in *Early Letters of Jane Welsh Carlyle*.) This latter circumstance was also most likely in part the cause of Carlyle's cold reception at Haddington a few days before Irving paid his visit there.

Irving, after this short Edinburgh visit, returned to Glasgow, and "was busy with correspondence connected with his departure" from his charge there, and "with the ceremony and the pain of taking farewell" of his Glasgow friends. He went to Paisley, soon afterwards, and then home to Annan in May to prepare for his ordination by the Presbytery there. Early in July following, he paid a flying visit to Edinburgh; called at Haddington, and set out for London on the 8th of this month, to take charge of the little Caledonian Chapel to which he had been "called" in the preceding April.

It is instructive and amusing to compare Mr. Froude's description of Irving's state of mind and heart when undertaking this new enterprise, with that given by Mrs. Oliphant. Mr. Froude represents him as broken-hearted and well-nigh distracted by his (imaginary) disappointment in love, and says that, "He went back to his place in London, flung himself into religious excitement as grosser natures go into drink, and took popularity by storm."¹ Mrs. Oliphant says: "He set out, amid honour and good

¹ "Life of Carlyle," i. 156.

wishes, with the highest hopes in his mind, and charity in his heart, on the morning of the 8th of July, 1822, to London. The future seems to have glowed before him with all the indefinite brightness of early youth. . . . Nature, prevoyant, tingled into his heart an inarticulate thrill of prophecy. He went forth joyfully, wittingly, aware of the hazards of that battle, into the deepest of the fight.”¹ Irving himself wrote to his friend, William Graham of Burnswark, on the 5th of August following (about three weeks after his arrival in London): “You cannot conceive how happy I am here in the possession of my own thoughts, in the liberty of my own conduct, and in the favour of the Lord. The people have received me with open arms; the church is already regularly filled; my preaching, tho’ of the average of an hour and a quarter, listened to with the most serious attention. My mind plentifully endowed with thought and feeling—my life ordered, as God enables me after his holy Word—my store supplied out of His abundant liberality. These are the elements of my happiness, for which I am bound to render unmeasured thanks.”² When Carlyle next met Irving, a year after this, he says he found him “in high, sunny humour, . . . jovial, riant, jocose,—jocose rather than serious throughout, which was a new phasis to me.”³

Irving’s first Letter to Miss Welsh, after his settlement in London, is dated 9th September, 1822. Its object is a laudable one, to stimulate her in religious and moral improvement. But as it is printed almost in full in Froude’s *Life of Carlyle*, i. 157–60, it need not be reproduced here.⁴

The next Letter to Miss Welsh bears date 23rd February, 1823. In this he says: “Surely when I write this Poem I am projecting upon the Pleasures of Affection, one niche in the temple, and that among the most honoured, shall be

¹ “Life of Edward Irving,” i. 148–9.

² Ibid., i. 152.

³ “Reminiscences,” ii. 112.

⁴ The Letter as printed by Mr. Froude abounds in unmarked omissions and errors. One alone need be mentioned. Irving has written: “Keep away these two things, The cruel treatment of another, and the deification of oneself.” For “oneself” Mr. Froude substitutes “energy.”

devoted to a mother and an only daughter entertaining a young man of feeling and sentiment with the kindness of their affections and the hospitality of their home. It is what the world does not understand, and never fails to mistake for some other and more common and intelligible relation. And truly, I myself hardly understand or trouble myself to enquire more but that I was exquisitely happy. . . . I was forcibly reminded of my neglect to you, for when I wrote you last I have forgotten, it is so long [ago]. . . .

"I have such a treat every day I pass a window in which there is a beautiful head of Miss Kelly, the exquissive [*sic*] performer of *Juliet* ; it has the very cast of your eye in one of its most piercing moods, which I can never stand to meet, and the roundness of your forehead, and somewhat of the archness of one of your smiles. I must positively have it bought and send it when I send the copy of my volume.¹ That is to be a curious book, a kind of defiance rather than defense. I know only one thing, they will call me the most impudent fellow in his Majesty's dominions. . . . The whole will be a *rudis indigestaque moles* of materials that an abler less burdened man might have made a noble monument to himself out of. . . .

"With my love to your mother, adieu for the present, and expect to hear from me soon.—Yours most truly,
"EDWD. IRVING."

The language Irving addresses to Miss Welsh in the foregoing Letter makes it perfectly clear that he does not pretend to be a suitor for her hand, or a "lover" in any other sense than that of an affectionate friend. The stupid world, he says in other words, cannot believe that an affectionate friendship can exist between a young man and a young woman unless it have for its object the more common and intelligible relation of courtship with a view to

¹ Irving's first Book, "For Judgment to Come," &c. When published, a copy of the Book was sent to Miss Welsh and her Mother, with this inscription: "To Jane Welsh, my beloved Pupil and most dear Friend, and to her Mother whom I love no less—to whose smiles upon his labours the Author is indebted for much—very much of his present ardour."

marriage. Further, if Irving had been conscious of having trifled with Miss Welsh's feelings and of having wrecked her happiness, would he have placidly assured her, as he does in this Letter, that he did not trouble to think more of it beyond reflecting that he himself had been exquisitely happy in the process! Any one that knew Irving could not believe that of him. The oratorical, affected, exaggerative language of most of his Letters did not deceive Miss Welsh; for she knew his style of speaking and writing, and was quite sharp enough to estimate it at its true value. In writing to Carlyle a little while after receiving this Letter, she says of Irving: "I do not understand him; sometimes I think he loves me almost half as well as you do; and then again, that I am nothing to him at all." At a later date she tells Carlyle that "Edward Irving's much vaunted friendship for me is nothing more than a froth of professions."

When at Haddington immediately before his wedding, Irving invited Miss Welsh to come to London and pay a visit to him and his Wife. Miss Welsh accepted with exuberant delight, and waited long and impatiently for him to fix the date of the visit.—Overjoyed forsooth, at the idea of being the guest of her "lost lover" and of having for hostess her successful rival!

Irving's next Letter to Miss Welsh is dated from London, 10th May, 1824. In this he says: "I promised to write to you when I had got settled in London in my own home in a condition to receive you under my own roof. . . . But I am still unsettled and still without a home, and still unable to press the visit. . . .

"The cause of my unsettled condition at present is chiefly my occupation which is the cause of all things peculiar in me at this moment. My head with difficulty sustaineth my labours, and these moments I now steal from the midst of hours devoted to the Lord. But now I think I shall be settled in a fortnight, and I would now ask the favour of your visit but that for these reasons I shall request you to postpone it a season: I have no money, and my house will be furnished piecemeal, and will hardly be ready for the habitation of a lady till the end of Summer. My

Wife's Mother indeed comes up to wait upon her some time during the next month and to remain with us for some weeks. My Father-in-law and Sister-in-law are coming up in the end of July to remain a while; and about the time of their removal should come the time of my annual rest, if indeed this year I am to have any rest. These things are rendered necessary by my dear Wife's present state, and you will see how on every account it will be more convenient and pleasant for us to have your company next Spring.

"One thing more, my dear Jane, into your own ear. My dear Isabella has succeeded in healing the wounds of my heart by her unexampled affection and tenderness; but I am hardly yet in a condition to expose them. My former calmness and piety are returning. I feel growing in grace and in holiness; and before another year I shall be worthy in the eye of my own conscience to receive you into my house and under my care, which till then I should hardly be.

". . . Be assured, my dear Jane, whom I may still, I trust, without offence call the child of my intellect,—be assured of the same sincerity of affection from me as ever, and as I have said, purer and more pure.

"Thomas Carlyle is to be with me this month; and it is an inexpressible delight to me.—I am, my dear Jane, Your most affectionate friend,

"EDWD. IRVING."

Mr. Froude has printed the paragraph of the foregoing Letter, which begins "One thing more," and ends "should hardly be." This is the portion of the Letter, no doubt, which provoked Miss Welsh into calling Irving "That stupendous Ass, the Orator."

The next¹ Letter is dated from Dover, 12th October, 1824. It reads: "My dear friend and pupil, . . . I am very sorry, my dear Jane, that anything should have occurred to interrupt for a moment the sweet relationship

¹ One Letter from Irving to Miss Welsh, prior to this, and referred to in her Letter to Carlyle of 17th September, 1824, has been lost or destroyed.

which we stood in to one another when we parted in Scotland, and you sent the pledge of your regard to my wife by her husband's hand. I was in fault apparently but not inwardly in fault. You should have given me large credit, and there I think you were in fault. But we must amend our faults. . . . Let us forget all the past occurrences of the last two years, except to reap from them wholesome lessons of self-knowledge and self-improvement; also let us return to the unsuspecting and unfearing intimacy in which we stood to one another before. My wife desires her affectionate regards to you and your dear mother; and my boy (who is Edward after all, John being objected to by the higher power), my dear smiling sensible boy, would kiss you and smile on you till he made your heart glad, if you were here to nurse him on your knee.—Farewell, my dear friend.—Yours most affectionately,

“EDWD. IRVING.”

And here is the next and last Letter from Irving to Miss Welsh:—

“KIRKCALDY, 8th October, 1825.

“MY DEAR JANE,— . . . I thought by this time to have seen you in Dumfriesshire, where it was my purpose to have passed about a fortnight of my time, and I had schemed it to have ridden up Nithsdale with Thomas Carlyle, for I had many things to say both to you and him. [*The illness of wife and child detained him at Kirkcaldy.*]

“It relieved my mind greatly to hear of your kind visit to my Father's house¹; for it made me hope you had relented of the hard things you had thought of me and the hard things you had said of me,² which I never resented, nor will ever resent, but with words of affection and much love. And if the Lord hear my prayer, the time is coming

¹ During her visit at Hoddam Hill, Miss Welsh and Carlyle called on Irving's father at Annan.

² The “hard things” thought and said of Irving by Miss Welsh were no doubt reported to him by Mrs. Montagu, with whom Miss Welsh was corresponding, and in whose house Irving had been living while his wife was gone to Kirkcaldy with her invalid child.

when communion shall be established between us through the bond of the spirit of Christ,—which may the Lord hasten in his good time. . . . The Lord bless you and all your friends, to whom I desire to be remembered with affection.—Your affectionate friend,

“EDWD. IRVING.”

NOTE FOUR

CATHERINE AURORA KIRKPATRICK AND BLUMINE

Catherine Aurora Kirkpatrick (the “Dear Kitty” of her intimate friends) was a half-cousin of Charles Buller and a full cousin of Carlyle’s friend, Mrs. Strachey, with whom she was living when Carlyle first went to London in 1824. Miss Kirkpatrick’s early history is a romance in itself; but as Carlyle has related it in his Letters and *Reminiscences* in sufficient detail for our purpose here, it need not now be further referred to. She afterwards became the Wife of Captain James Winsloe Phillips, of the 7th Hussars, and died in 1889 aged 87. It is said that she considered herself to be the Original of Blumine, the Goddess of Flowers, or the Rose-goddess, of *Sartor Resartus*.

The arguments advanced by Miss Kirkpatrick’s friends to prove her title to this distinction do not seem to be very convincing.¹ The principal points in these arguments may be summarised thus:—

(1) Miss Kirkpatrick and her relatives *believed* that she was the Original of Blumine. Against this it may be urged with at least equal force, that Miss Welsh and her friends, including Carlyle’s Family, had no doubt that *she* was the Original: and these were perhaps in a better position to learn from Carlyle himself who the Original really was.

(2) Miss Kirkpatrick was christened Catherine *Aurora*;

¹ See articles in “Nineteenth Century,” September, 1892; “Westminster Review,” August, 1894; and “Blackwood,” July, 1893.

and Blumine is called Aurora in *Sartor*.—But it is not the case that Blumine is called Aurora in *Sartor*: Aurora is twice mentioned in the Romance Chapter; once in this sentence, “Such was the element they [Teufelsdröckh and Blumine] now lived in; in such a many-tinted, radiant Aurora,” &c. And, for the second and last time, in the following: “As from Æolian Harps in the breath of dawn, as from the Memnon’s Statue struck by the rosy finger of Aurora, unearthly music was around him, and lapped him into untried balmy Rest.” The superstition that the rays of the morning sun striking on the stone effigy of Memnon produce a vocal note, is often mentioned by classical writers, —Pliny, Tacitus, &c. Carlyle’s reference to Aurora here is a poetical or classical allusion to Homer’s “Rosy-fingered Morn, the Mother of Dawn,” and not to any sublunary mortal. It is worth noting too, that Carlyle writes, in a brief Note to Miss Welsh: “I had a Letter the other day from Mrs. Montagu in which she compares you to an Aurora Borealis. What think you of that?”¹ Nothing is more natural, or more in keeping with Carlyle’s habit of giving pet names, than that he should himself have familiarly applied Mrs. Montagu’s “Aurora Borealis” (or for brevity’s sake Aurora) to Miss Welsh. “Aurora,” therefore, does not seem to strengthen Miss Kirkpatrick’s “claim,” if it does not actually weaken it.

(3) Miss Kirkpatrick was of Persian or Eastern descent on her Mother’s side, and Carlyle calls Blumine “this fairest of Orient Light-bringers.”—But the appellation “fairest of Orient Light-bringers” is at least quite as applicable to Miss Welsh, whose home was directly *East* of Carlyle’s, and who often came to Town on visits, and on one occasion took lessons in German from him. She brought “joy, hope and gladness” into his rather gloomy Edinburgh element, and was, as he says, “the sun that had risen to illuminate his world.” Readers cannot have failed to observe how often Carlyle associates *Light* in one or other form with Miss Welsh.

(4) Miss Kirkpatrick, being partly of Persian or foreign

¹ Carlyle’s Note is undated; but Mrs. Montagu’s Letter bears date 13th May, 1826.

extraction, was of duskier complexion than the pure European, and Carlyle has described Blumine as a "brunette," and as being "much more enchanting than your mere white Heaven-angels of women."—But Miss Welsh had Gypsy blood in her, and was dark enough to be often mistaken for a foreigner.

(5) Blumine was "some one's Cousin," and had for Guardian a "Duenna Cousin"; Miss Kirkpatrick was a half-cousin to Charles Buller, and seems to have been under the Guardianship of Mrs. Strachey, her full Cousin; therefore Miss Kirkpatrick must have been the Original of Blumine!—This argument is not conclusive, for nearly every one is "some one's Cousin"! Miss Welsh had many Cousins, at least two of whom she counted as lovers. The word "Cousin" according to Scottish usage is a very elastic term: it is often used to denote a real Cousin, but it also frequently means only a forty-second Cousin, a clansman, a compatriot, a mere friend or acquaintance. It was the proper word for Carlyle to use where common prudence demanded indefiniteness. Teufelsdröckh was "surprised at the Duenna Cousin, whoever she may have been, in whose meagre, hunger-bitten philosophy, the religion of young hearts was, from the first, faintly approved of." These words would be singularly inappropriate if they were ever intended to apply to Mrs. Strachey, who was the highly esteeming and esteemed "one *friend*" whom Carlyle had made in his first visit to London, who gave him a costly gold pencil, and sent to him (at Birmingham on his way home to Scotland), as a present, "the most superb writing-desk" he "had ever seen!" From first to last there was the most cordial and sincere friendship between Carlyle and Mrs. Strachey. She could not have been the Duenna Cousin.

Miss Kirkpatrick's claim to be the Original of Blumine is rigorously ruled out of court by the exigencies of Time and Place: Carlyle did not meet her until after he had gone to London in the Summer of 1824. But Blumine had been loved, and lost (temporarily), years prior to this date, as *Sartor*, read in connection with Carlyle's Letters

and Annotations, clearly proves. The Leith Walk incident (in 1822) occurred *after* Teufelsdröckh's rejection by Blumine, and *before* he had left Edinburgh for London; Carlyle was not again in Edinburgh on "a sultry Dog-day" until 1827,—some time after his marriage.

Carlyle had reached the "Centre of Indifference," in all senses, before he went to London! "Indifference" to all "snow-and-rose-bloom Maidens," "Brunettes," or "Nut-brown Maids," except Miss Welsh. Even in Paris we find him sitting writing a long and loving Letter to her who "was worth any twenty women in the world," and allowing Mr. Strachey (a married man) to act as *chaperon* to Miss Kirkpatrick in her inspection of the Louvre. There is no proof that Carlyle was ever in love with "Dear Kitty," and less than none that he sought her hand and was refused. In the *Reminiscences* Carlyle writes (1866): "It strikes me now, more than it then did," that Mrs. Strachey "could have liked to see 'Dear Kitty' and myself come together and so continue near her, both of us, through life: the good kind soul,—and Kitty too . . . might perhaps have been charmed? None knows?" The natural inference from this is that the attempt to "charm" was never made (and consequently never rejected), otherwise Carlyle himself would have "known," and remembered also,—only too well!

It cannot be denied that the Blumine of *Sartor Resartus* bears a very unmistakable likeness in person, temperament, position and circumstances, to Miss Welsh; and that in nearly all these particulars Blumine is the exact antithesis of Miss Kirkpatrick, as Carlyle has described her. Blumine had "dark tresses"; "Dear Kitty" had "floods of bronzed-red hair." Blumine was noted for her "gifts"; Miss Kirkpatrick "had not much of developed intellect." Blumine had a sufficiency of "naphtha-fire" in her veins; "Dear Kitty" was "languidly harmonious, placid," and was never "angry at any creature for a moment in her life." Blumine was "unhappily dependent"; Miss Kirkpatrick was "sole mistress of herself and fifty thousand pounds." This latter circumstance seems by itself enough to effectively bar her "claim." Miss Welsh, on the other hand, voluntarily

rendered herself "entirely dependent on her Mother," by generously, and from a sense of filial duty, making over to her the whole of her small patrimony.

In conclusion, Teufelsdröckh admits that Blumine was a "woman of genius." Which of the three ladies, Margaret Gordon, Catherine Aurora Kirkpatrick or Jane Baillie Welsh was, in Carlyle's opinion, the "woman of genius"? The answer to this is the answer to the question, "Who was the Original of Blumine?" Who *could* it have been but "The Flower of Haddington"?

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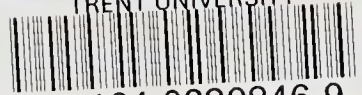
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